



M.Phil. Thesis

**A Study of the Processes and Outcomes of Women's Schooling in Guangzhou,
1931-1937**

By

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Abstract

This study attempts to reconstruct the schooling processes of a public girls' school in Guangzhou in the 1930s from the perspectives of the four respondents who, with the support of the family, got access to education. In terms of curriculum, it was similar to those of the public schools and mission schools for both sexes. The education was elitist in nature. Academic performance and search for excellence in sports constituted the core of the schooling processes. Girls were expected to take up important jobs in the society by continuing education in the college level.

What made the schooling unique and special was the culture developed through the interactions among the principals, teachers and students. Although the Nationalist Government and the provincial authorities were successful in diverting most of the students from involving in student activism and further contact with the CCP, the encroachment of Japan had provided situations in which some of students were radicalized and joined the Communist movement.

The permissive attitude of the school allowed teachers to teach in their own ways. The close relationship between teachers and students, the teachers' expertise in subject knowledge, and their creative and interesting lectures had exerted profound influence on the students and in return the students paid due respect to the teachers. In addition, the sharing of principals also widened the horizon of the students. It was interesting to find that the students were able to distinguish between official ideology and general knowledge that they would like to absorb. Therefore, there was no obvious confrontation between the school and the students.

The respondents were graduated in 1937, the year open conflicts between China and Japan broke out. It was paradoxical that the war had shattered their dreams to further studies, it also provided a situation in which they could apply what they had learned to teaching. Through the participation in teaching they began to realize the meanings and benefits of education. Similarly, the political upheavals from 1949 to the 1960s in China made them confirm the meaning of education by emphasizing the benefits of schooling to the national development.

Lastly, the respondents had experienced benefits of schooling in various aspects of life. Some were intrinsic values of education, e.g. economic independence, critical and rational minds, greater job opportunity and more earnings while others were specific to the respondents, e.g. a status group identity, a social network, a moral concern towards individuals and the country, a commitment in education and a bond of sisterhood.

論文撮要

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to reconstruct the schooling process in a girls' school in Guangzhou established by the Guangdong provincial government in the late 1920s. It also reviews if and how education benefits the students through the knowledge that they received. With the opening of China to the West in the mid nineteenth century, more and more missionaries came to China to spread their beliefs. Alongside their religious activities, the missionaries started hospitals, orphanages, and schools to help them spread their religion on the one hand and improve the life of the Chinese people on the other. There were schools set up for girls whose chance to learn before was mainly confined to their homes. This study attempts to examine the schooling experiences of women and the benefits of schooling from the perspective of four women.

This study is divided into two parts. The first part, from chapter one to four, introduces the substantive problem of the study, the theoretical framework, the historical background, and the research design of the study. In the second part, the factors for the entry to school are discussed. The schooling process of a girls' school as recollected by four students will be examined. There will be an analysis of the benefits of schooling to individual student that followed by a discussion on the significance of women education.

In the following sections, the substantive problem will first be introduced. Then a historical context will briefly be given in which political and economic conditions will be discussed. An account of the education of the rural areas will be given to contrast the development of education in the cities. This serves to put the respondents in their particular context. In the last section, the perspective of study, i.e. the symbolic interactionism will also be introduced.

1.1 The Substantive Problem: Women's Disadvantageous Position in Education in China before 1842

The Chinese women suffered from a disadvantageous position in the male-dominated tradition before the coming of foreigners in the mid-nineteenth century. In his book, 'A History of Chinese Women's life', Chen Dongyuan points out that there was no education for Chinese women and all they learned was only related to their life (Chen, 1937: p.1). Although it is not an accurate description of Chinese women, it does reflect the inferior position of them in the long history of China.

In studying the family of China, C.K. Yang (1974) states that the traditional status of women may not have been so low as in some contemporary cultures, e.g. Islamic and Japanese. The status of a Chinese woman improved with age and the bearing of children, and as she could become the head of a household (Yang, 1974: p.105). But in each stage of her life she held inferior position to the males of the same generational level and of the generations above her (Yang, 1974: p.106). As a daughter, she must obey her father; as a wife, she must follow her husband and as a mother, she must follow her son. This long process of subordination and adjustment was a painful one because there were no other ways out. Some chose suicide as the only means (Yang, 1974: p.106). And a woman would become miserable if she became a widow, or a concubine, or a *Mui Tsai*.

Educational opportunity was available to girls in well off families but formal education and right to attend civil examination were denied to them. Therefore it was not easy for a girl to become learned in China. However, educated women did exist in traditional China. They were members of royal family, daughters of senior

officials and rich merchants, and descendants of scholars (Guisso, 1981 & Chen, 1937).

In studying women and culture in the seventeenth century, Ko points out that there emerged a group of women reader-writer. Women in the seventeenth century even enjoyed a greater degree of informal power and social freedom (Ko, pp.9-10). What made it possible were the transition of the Jiangnan economy into a thorough monetarized one, the blooming publishing industry, and the growth in the number of education women with expanded opportunities for them to interact with one another and with society at large (Ko, 1994:p.29). By pointing out that women's educational opportunity was not as limited as it has been assumed, Ko enriches our understanding of women's position in the Chinese society.

After 1942, missionaries started to provide education for Chinese women and it was followed by the native Chinese at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1907, schooling of women was formally included in the national education system. At the outset, the number admitted was quite small but with the passing of time, the right of education to women was gradually accepted.

It is interesting to know how women were able to start their education under the new situation. It is equally interesting to examine what and how they had learned in school. It will be more fruitful to investigate what benefits they gained during the process of schooling and how they perceived the things they learned. In the present study, it is hoped that through the reconstruction of the schooling process in a Girls' School, the benefits and the subsequent outcomes of schooling can be arrested. For the sake of analysis later, the historical context is given in the next section.

1.2 Context of the Study: Education for Girls in Guangdong in 1930s

Ever since the opening of China in 1842, the position of Chinese women had been changing. Christianity played an important part in the improvement of women's position. The first programme to promote equality of the sex in the nineteenth-century China was carried out by the Taiping leaders, who were influenced by Christian ideas. The Taiping leaders formulated policies which encouraged the social, economic and political participation of women. For example, women were not only recruited to serve in the army, but also allowed to receive education, take part in the civil examination, become officials as well as share land of the state. Social practices which were unfavourable to women were abolished. For instance, foot-binding, concubines, prostitutes and the sale of slaves were eradicated (Yen, 1996: pp.136-140). Monogamy was encouraged though the leaders themselves did not follow it. (Tu, 1995: pp.259-260). These policies did offer more opportunities for women on both political and social participation.

The Christian missionaries also contributed a lot to the improvement of women's status by providing educational opportunity to them. After receiving education, most of them became skilled workers, nurses, teachers, doctors and evangelical workers in the church. They started to exert their influences in various fields. At the end of the nineteenth century, YWCA not only provided services to women but also raised their consciousness by educating them to fight for their own rights. The Association worked for the advancement of women through organizing social programmes, pressing for industrial reforms as well as promoting women's rights in China (Johnsen-Rod, 1981: p.8). Snow points out that although Christian women was only a small amount, they had played leading roles in many different fields. The Soong sisters were good examples (Snow, 1967: p.109).

At the turn of the twentieth century, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao advocated the abolition of foot-binding and women's education and pointed out the relationship between them. They were among the first in modern China to draw attention to these problems. However, the purposes of women education suggested by them was still limited to the training of 'virtuous mothers and good wives', an ideal shared by the conservative gentry class (Wong, 1991: p.270). Liang was influenced by utilitarianism as he used education as a means to improve the quality of the population. In 1907, regulations for women education were issued and there was a place for girls in the national education system. But the aims were more or less the same as those advocated by Kang and Liang (Wong, 1991: p.272).

In the first decade of the Chinese Republic, Chinese politics was much affected by warlordism. It was a period of political chaos and national crises. It was also a time in which new ideas and culture emerged. The New Cultural Movement, which culminated at the May Fourth movement, brought a lot of issues to the front. One of the most popular journals at that time was the 'New Youth' in which women problems were discussed. The themes included social relations between both sexes, free love and marriage, problem of chastity, economic independence of women and political participation of women. Women education was also one of the issues of the time as it was part of the campaign to fight against the Confucian tradition.

During the period of Nationalist government, some progress was made in girls' education along the coastal cities but little was done to extend education opportunity to girls in rural areas. Education was limited to the privileged elite classes in the urban centres while illiteracy in the countryside was serious. It was also during this period that Chiang Kaishek promulgated policies to exercise tight control over education and schools. He forced the Christian schools and colleges to

register with the Ministry of education. Huang (1996) points out that this was a result of the GMD's policy of depoliticization under Chiang Kaishek.

1.2.1. Political Environment in 1930 China

Chiang Kaishek became the leader of China after the Northern Expedition of 1927. The GMD managed to complete the unification of China with the help of warlords in the north. Therefore, the unification achieved by Chiang was more apparent than real because warlords still enjoyed semi-independent regional status in their power bases. Although some of these warlords were 'progress' in outlook, they always put their own benefits before national interests. Below is an introduction of these warlords with their regional power bases:

1. Li Zongren & Li Jishen headed the Guangxi Clique which dominated the provinces of Guangxi, Guangdong, Hunan and Hubei.
2. Feng Yuxiang occupied the provinces of Shandong, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia.
3. The Young Marshal Zhang Xueliang controlled Manchuria and Rehe.
4. Yan Xishan had established his base in *Shanxi* and the neighbouring areas (Hsu, 1995: p.541).

The existence of these warlords not only created ruling problem for GMD and made real unification impossible but also drained a good portion of the country's meager resources by maintaining their military forces instead of investing in national construction.

At the same time, the GMD was plagued by factional strife. The right wing, led by Hu Hanmin and the West Hill group was in constant conflict with the left

wing headed by Wang Jingwei. The third force was represented by Chiang Kaishek himself and he had to 'chart his course alternately favouring each with his support according to the dictates of political necessity and expediency' (Hsu, 1995: p.544). This internal strife explained why the GMD never appeared strong and united even the people's hope of a united country was laid upon them.

Added to these was the challenge of the Chinese Communist Party which, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Zhude, was trying to establish its influence with the support of the peasantry. With the growth of its power and popularity among the intellectuals and youths, the CCP had posed the greatest threat to the rule of Chiang. From 1930 to 1934 Chiang had launched five Campaigns of encirclement and extermination against the Communists. The fifth campaign had forced the CCP to leave the base in Jiangxi and started the 'Long March'. In the end, the Communists managed to avoid total extermination and settled in Yanan where they reorganized their tactics both against the GMD and the Japanese. After the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, Yanan became a magnetic centre attracting the youths from every part of China for a socialist revolution.

The Republican era was not only fraught with internal troubles, but also the mounting pressure of external invasion. Under the instigation of The Guangdong Army and the ambitions of extreme militarists at home, the Japanese invasion had never been halted since latter half of the nineteenth century. The Manchurian Crisis of 1931 had aroused nationwide anti-Japanese sentiment and activities. Although the Tanggu Truce was concluded in 1933 and temporarily checked Japan's advance into North China, the Japanese militarists was only waiting for another chance. In 1935, the Guangdong Army resumed encroachment, forcing the establishment of autonomous governments in Hebei and Inner Mongolia.

These moves stimulated a wave of Chinese protests and the revival of student movement. On 9 December 1935 thousands of students marched in Beiping to protest against the ineffectiveness of the GMD response to Japanese encroachment. In the same month, the Shanghai National Salvation Association demanded the withdrawal of Japanese troops from eastern Hebei and Manchuria. In May, a nationwide National Salvation Association was formed to call for immediate resistance to Japan. It was not until the Xi'an Incident (1936) that Chiang started to take a more vigorous action against Japan. In 1937, the second United Front was formed between the GMD and the CCP which represented the consent of both sides to end the civil war and fight against Japanese invasion.

1.2.2. Economic Conditions

All my respondents agreed that under the administration of Chen Jitang, Guangzhou experienced tremendous economic development. During conversations, they attributed the prosperity and peace in the 1930s to the sound policies of the provincial government. However, Lin (1997) points out that the urban development was actually achieved at the expense of the rural areas in Guangdong. During 1931-32, the provincial administration under Chen Jitang campaigned for local reconstruction and tax reduction. But to the disappointment of the peasants, the consequence was that reconstruction increased rather than reduced the peasants' tax burden (Lin, 1997: p. 108). Lin further states that 'for every new school or new road that was built, and for every new programme that was launched, some fresh imposts would be levied by the authorities. The huge road-building project, in particular, had provoked widespread discontent among rural taxpayers although the tax rates varied in different localities' (Lin, 1997: p.108) Chen (1973) also points out that the agrarian conditions were deteriorating because of the increased

concentration of landownership, the rise of rents and the price of land, increasing taxation and declining wages (Chen, 1973: p.112).

In order to maintain a large provincial army which was indispensable to safeguarding his separatist regime, Chen Jitang and the top officials 'closed their eyes to rapacious conduct of their subordinates'. (Lin, 1997: p.108) Although Chen started a cooperative movement as an integral part of his Three-Year Reconstruction Programme to rehabilitate the rural economy, he failed as a result of the half-heartedness in its implementation (Lin, 1997: pp.153-154). Similar programme was also carried out by Chiang Kaishek in central China to attract the support of rural elite (Wei, 1985: pp.70-75). Chiang intended to rely on them to counterbalance the work of the Communists and carry out economic reconstruction in Jiangxi.

In the conclusion of his study of Guangdong's rural economy, Lin summarizes the difficulties faced by the peasants.

1. A demographic explosion since the nineteenth century resulted in a decline in labour productivity.
2. They suffered from the consequences of trade recession while being denied a fair share of the benefits from trade booms.
3. They were subject to heavy land tax burdens, especially under the administration of Chen Jitang.
4. Oppression of poor tenants by rack-renting landlords was common.
5. Sources of credit became more limited as number of pawnshops declined as a result of government policy (Lin, 1997: pp.162-169)

According to Lin, 'It is not a matter of coincidence that the 1920s and 1930s witnessed the making of a revolution, for the agrarian crisis had created a revolution situation without which the Communist revolution would have lost its appeal' (Lin, 1997: p.168)

The four respondents under study were urban dwellers who had little contact with rural inhabitants. Judging by the occupation of their fathers, they belonged to the middle classes with one exception. They were well protected by their parents although they were females. The more or less comfortable life resulted a lack of their genuine understanding world outside the city in their youths. Life in the city was greatly different from that of the village. What they saw were the constructions of urban facilities and the buildings of new roads and bridges which had imposed heavy burdens upon other social classes. It was comparatively easy for them to get access to opportunity of education which on the contrary was beyond the imagination of the girls in rural areas.

1.2.3. Education in Rural Areas

In order to present a contrast between urban and rural areas, a brief description of education conditions in rural Guangdong is offered in this section. According to the surveys conducted by J.L. Buck in the 1930s, about half of the male population of southern China was literate to various degrees. While only 2 to 3 percent of females over the age of seven had received any education (Perkins & Yusuf, 1984: p.164). These figures clearly demonstrated that females in rural areas still suffered from discrimination and limitations. As a matter of fact, education development in rural areas was much slower than that in the cities. Before 1949, nearly all of the 5000 secondary schools and 205 universities and colleges were located in cities. Fortunately, a significant percentage of the 347,000 modern

primary schools were in rural areas together with a vast network of village schools supported by local clans or through charitable donations (Perkins & Yusuf, 1984: pp.164-165).

In early twentieth century, in the rural areas the traditional schools remained, by and large, the only source of education and received support from the lineage networks domination by landlords. As a result, a dualistic education system began to emerge, comprising of modern, state-controlled schools concentrated mainly in the cities and rural schools that remained loyal to the traditional texts and the method of rote learning (Perkins & Yusuf, 1984: p.164).

The progress in education in the rural areas suffered from a number of disadvantages. Some peasants preferred moral education to western education as the latter would threaten to disrupt their social existence. The disorder brought about by the warlord era, civil wars and Japanese invasion all made progress impossible. In addition, the revenues from land, title deeds, business and sales taxes, as well as the *likin* which had been used to finance rural education, were frequently diverted elsewhere (Perkins & Yusuf, 1984: p.164) Furthermore, the central government and most provincial authorities would like to focus on economic development in the cities and tended to ignore the needs of rural population. The last but not least, there was serious shortage of qualified teachers who would like to teach in the villages.

1.2.4. Guangdong in the 1930s

In the 1930s, the province of Guangdong was under the control of General Chen Jitang who was the aide of General Li Jishen of the Nationalist government before the Northern Expedition (1927). Li was the military head of the Guangxi

who had helped Chiang in the Northern Expedition. After the Northern Expedition, Chiang intended to undermine the power of regional warlords and centralized the military. In order to silence opposition, Chiang detained Li Jishen, Li Zhongren and Bei xue ci at Nanjing after the Third National Conference of the GMD. With the recommendation of Hu Hanman and Ku Yinfen, Chen gained the trust of Chiang Kaishek and was appointed the Commander-in-Chief of the Eighth Route Army. In 1930, Chen sent troops to crush the Guangxi clique and helped Chiang fight against Feng and Yen. However, in an internal power struggle between Chiang on one side and Hu and Ku on the other, Chen sided with the Hu and Ku and angered the latter. At the same time, Chen consolidated his power base in Guangdong by taking the power from Chen Mingshu, the supporter of Chiang (Jiang & Fang, 1995, pp.791-793). With the support of Hu and Ku, Chen controlled Guangdong and governed the province for a period of about six years.

In order to strengthen his rule in Guangdong, Chen not only expanded his troop, established shipbuilding industry and a naval academy but also purchased arms from foreign countries and invited German military advisors to train his soldiers. Guangdong also experienced tremendous economic growth under Chen's administration as he encouraged the diversification of consumer goods production. The province entered a relatively stable and prosperous period in the 1930s. Chen was remembered as a leader who provided opportunity and employment which could hardly be found in other provinces.

With a more stable source of revenue, the provincial government launched many projects to build the infrastructure of Guangzhou, for example, the construction of railways, highways and the Zhujiang Bridge, and the establishment of a broadcast station. The improvement in the transportation and communication systems greatly strengthened the economic foundation of the province. In education,

the provincial government also financed the building of the Zhongshan Library and the enlargement of the Zhongshan University. In secondary education, Chen also provided the Guangya Middle School with enough fund to implement what was planned (Zhou, 1983: p.362). All these were welcome by the citizens of Guangzhou (Lin, 1990: pp. 210-218).

Chen intervened into education by encouraging the study of the 'Four Books and the Five Classics'. It was stipulated that primary pupils needed to read the Four Books while students in middle schools needed to study the Five Classics (Chin, 1990: pp. 338-339 and Li, 1990: pp.104-112). He even instructed the Ministry of Education to publish textbooks on Confucian learning. The purpose of Chen's promotion of the study of Five Classics was that he intended to upgrade the moral standard of the people and consolidate his rule with the assistance of Confucian tenets. Wu Shih also criticized Chen for his borrowing the moral standard of 2500 years ago to mould the youths (Grieder, 1992: p.242). When the Minister of Education disagreed with him, Chen dismissed him immediately (Xu, 1990: pp. 340-344). In this way, Chen echoed the New Life Movement [1] launched by Chiang Kaishek in Nanjing. In 1934, Chiang also put forward the New Life Movement to consolidate his rule. Wei (1985) states that Chiang's revitalization of traditional Confucian values would appeal to the conservatism of the rural elite and elicit from them a personal commitment to the government and its programmes. Their support would facilitate the implementation of the various counterrevolutionary measures used against the Communists during the fifth encirclement campaign and, afterward, the rural reconstruction programmes (Wei, 1985: p.76).

Chen's policies helped to bring about stability and prosperity to the people of Guangdong while some other provinces still suffered from social and economic

chaos. His administration surpassed other provinces in economic developments. Financial support to education enabled a steady growth in the field and made educational planning possible. Besides the construction of the Zhongshan Library and the expansion of the Zhongshan University, three more public schools for girls were planned to set up in Guangdong (Pan, 1984: p.1). It was also during this period that the first public school for girls was established and expanded. However, Chen's policy of urban development at the expense of rural areas imposed heavy burden on the peasants who could not share the benefits enjoyed by the city dwellers.

1.3 Perspectives of the Study: Symbolic Interactionism

The study aims to reconstruct the schooling process via the recollection of the four respondents, their first hand experiences will be greatly emphasized. It also attempts to examine if and how the knowledge they gained during the process had benefited them. In other words, this study deals with the subjective meanings of their schooling experiences. Therefore, the approach to school processes in this study is in the tradition of symbolic interactionism. The outstanding figures of this school include Mead laid the foundation of the approach and other followers such as Blumer, Goffman and Becker. This approach has three postulates:

1. Human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. They inhabit two different worlds: the 'natural' world and the social world. How she attributes meanings to the external world and objects makes her human and social. Her subjective meanings will be the focus of study.
2. This attribution of meaning to objects through symbols is a continuous process.
3. This process takes place in a social context. (Woods, 1979: p. 16)

It is hoped that the reconstruction of schooling processes through the perspectives of the four respondents will help to throw light on the benefits they gained from their schooling in the Girls' School.

1.4 Significance of The Study

Theoretically, this study help to throw light on the ways knowledge was transmitted and produced. It will also helps to understand whether and how school knowledge including the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum had benefited women in a conservative yet changing society.

Empirically, the present study will explore the worlds of the graduates of the girls' school and, through their school experiences, reconstruct the schooling process of the school for girls in 1930 Guangzhou. On one hand, it helps to reveal the school life of female students of the day. On the other hand, it examines the benefits of education to women via the ways they acquired and applied knowledge in the school.

1.5 Research Questions

This study is to investigate if and how education has benefited the participation of four educated women in their work as teachers. To do so, the schooling of the respondents will be traced. Given the fact that there were many limitations to the women's reception of education in China, the factors contributing to their gaining the opportunity of education will be first examined. Here the focus is on their particular first-person narrative and therefore a micro approach is employed.

Then the reconstruction of different aspects of schooling through the recall and reflection of the respondents will be conducted. These aspects of schooling may be sources of knowledge which had benefited them. They include the physical environment, curriculum, hidden curriculum, social environment composed of social agents in the school as well as the outer environment. The respondents' interpretation of all these aspects will also be emphasized. The respondents serve as a vehicle to reveal aspects of schooling process and the benefits accompanied it.

Finally, the possible benefits of schooling in the perspective of the educated women will be analyzed. The focus will be on the subjective world of meaning of the respondents within their unique situations. Here they are active agents who interpret what they do and the world they are in. In a word, whether the knowledge they received from schooling had benefited them will be evaluated in their own perspectives.

Education is regarded as a possible transformative process in which the acquisition of knowledge and skills may help upward mobility, achievement of equality, self-actualization and liberation of the oppressed. Thus, the present study will be mainly confined to the discussion of what kind of schooling (knowledge) the women received and what benefits the schooling had conferred upon them. In other words, the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits in the perspective of the respondents will be discussed instead of the benefits from the angle of the society.

Note:

- [1] There are ample sources and historical studies on the New Life Movement. To name but a few, see the own account by Chiang Kaishek, "The New Life Movement" in Li, D.J. (ed.) (1969) *The Road to Communism: China Since*

1912 (New York: Nostrand Reinhold Company) p.130-132. And also Eastman, L.E. (1975) *The Abortive Revolution: China under Nationalist Rule, 1927-1937* (London: Harvard University Press) p.66-70. For a detailed account of the origin, content and the subsequent failure of the Movement, see Chu, Samuel C. (1980) "The New Life Movement before the Sino-Japanese Conflict: A Reflection of Kuomintang Limitations in Thought and Action" in Chan, F. Gibert (ed.) (1980) *China at the Crossroads: Nationalists and Communists, 1927-1949* (Westview) p.37-68

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Since the study aims at examining the subjective worlds of the respondents who studied in a public school for girls in Guangzhou in the 1930, the theory of symbolic interactionism is adopted to analyze how they saw schooling and the knowledge they received. For this reason, the theory of symbolic interactionism is briefly introduced below. The reconstruction of the schooling processes is also dealt with in this study, therefore, an account of sociological theories of education on schooling processes and knowledge is given in the following sections. For the explanation of the benefits of schooling, structural-functionalism and human capital theory are introduced in this chapter to help the subsequent analysis. It is obvious that the applicability of some theories is limited as they stem from the western world and are used to explain advanced capitalist societies. However, they can still help to throw light on certain aspects of schooling processes. A discussion on the applicability of these theories is conducted at the end of this chapter.

2.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism rests on three premises. 'The first premise is that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.' They include physical objects, other human beings, categories of human beings, institutions, guiding ideals, activities of others and such situations as an individual encounters in his daily life (Blumer, 1969: p.2). 'Meaning is either taken for granted and thus pushed aside as unimportant or it is regarded as a mere neutral link between the factors responsible for human behaviour and this behaviour as the product of such factors.' 'The position of symbolic interactionism, in contrast, is that the meanings that things have for human beings are central in their own right.' (Blumer, 1969: pp.2-3). It is expected that the respondents' views towards peoples, things and events during the schooling process can be examined.

The second premise is that 'the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.' There are two traditional ways of accounting for the origin of meaning. The first one regards 'meaning as emanating from the intrinsic makeup of the thing that has meaning.' Another one regards 'meaning as arising through a coalescence of psychological elements in the person.' Instead, symbolism interactionism sees 'meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people' and sees meanings as social products' (Blumer, p.4). It is interesting to know what knowledge, skills as well as values they learned in interaction with the teachers, classmates and other people in the school and what meanings they found in these interactions.

The third premise is that 'these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.' This process has two steps. First, the actor has to point out to himself that things that have meaning which is an internalized social process in that the actor is interacting with himself. Second, 'by virtual of this process of communicating with himself, interpretation becomes a matter of handling things.' Different respondents may have different points of view towards the same person, thing or event. It is equally interesting to know the differences and the reasons behind them.

Symbolic interactionism is grounded on a number of basic ideas (human groups or society, social interaction, objects, the human being as an actor, human action and the interconnection of the lines of action) which taken together represent the way in which it views human society and conduct.

2.2 Sociology of Education: The Processes of Schooling

2.2.1.The Deweyan Perspective

This perspective assumes that education is a moral undertaking to shape young minds so that they can create a future society organized along the principles initiated by their schooling experiences. According to John Dewey, it is an educational process in which the realization of individual potential can be integrated with the sharing of common experiences, common interests, and common aims (Carnoy and Levin, 1985: p.15).

Dewey states that schooling should be valued in its own right and therefore rejects the idea that its role is to contribute to some external objectives. On the contrary, the existing system can be transformed by shaping young minds in a particular way. There is a tone of optimism in the sense that education can be used as weapon against oppression and inequality. Education can also be viewed as agent of progressive social change and instrument of greater equality and democracy (Carnoy and Levin, 1985: p.16).

Judging from the above perspective, the schooling process is positive in that it develops the potential of individuals and liberates the minds of students. The function of knowledge is also emphasized as it is not a means of domination and oppression. The Deweyan perspective shares with the structural-functionalism in the view that the acquisition of knowledge is beneficial to both individuals and society as it is a force of change bringing about positive consequences. There is the assumption that all educators, teachers and students share the same view on the values and forms of knowledge. The way to transmit knowledge is also not elaborated.

2.2.2. The Structural-Functionalist Perspective

According to the structural-functionalist theory, society is a living organism with many interrelated parts. Whether an organism works well depends on the working of the parts. As one type of institution responsible for the socialization of the young, the school's object 'is to arouse and develop in the child a number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which he is specifically destined' (Durkheim, 1985: p.22).

Talcott Parsons (1985) points out that the school is to internalize in its pupils both the commitments and capacities for successful performance of their future roles and to allocate these human resources within the role-structure of the adult society. In this aspect, school can be seen as an important agent of socialization.

For Dreeben and Parsons, members of a society need to have a set of common belief, knowledge, and values for social unity and cohesion. Although family is another agent of socialization, schooling enables the child to emotionally separate from the family and learn to internalize a set of cultural values and norms that are broader than those learned from the family alone. In a real sense, the school is a microcosm of the larger society. The school reproduces and perpetuates the established social, cultural, economic and political structures. Dreeben (1968) summaries that through social interaction and learning in the school, pupils learn such norms of society as independence, achievement, universalism and specificity.

The schools, as Parsons points out, serves not only as an agent of socialization but also as a principal instrument of allocating roles in the society.

Individuals should be awarded differently for different levels of achievement as long as there has been fair and equal access to opportunity. As a result, there are bound to be significant differences among individuals of different socio-economic classes. However, the functionalists see class differences as not due to an inherent superiority of any particular group; rather, they are rooted in merits of the individual.

2.2.3. Structural-Functionalist View of Knowledge

Since structural-functionalists are concerned with the problem of increasing access to schooling rather than examining the nature of education, they pay little attention to the nature of the curriculum and the knowledge students receive. Nor do they focus on the complex process of schooling in which students are shaped. There is an assumption that education is taken for granted as a 'good' and that it is in the interests of both individuals and the national economy.

The school as an agent of socialization and role allocation has an "official" curriculum with a set of explicitly stated goals and objectives. These goals and objectives relate to what knowledge and skills ought to be imparted and attitudes developed (Pai & Adler, 1997: p.147). It is assumed that the students and the teachers do not take part in producing or reproducing knowledge, the students are just passive recipients of knowledge while the teachers will agree on the contents of knowledge, the ways of transmitting it as well as the goals and objectives stated.

The view of the structural-functionalists towards hidden curriculum is comparatively simplistic. They assume that schools impart the same set of attitudes, values and norms to all children through the use of hidden curriculum. Teachers are collaborators in transmitting values and knowledge while students are merely

passive recipients in the course of transmission. They fail to see that both teachers and students are able to play active roles in the process of knowledge production.

2.2.4. Schooling and Theories of Reproduction

(1) Economic-Reproductive Model

Theorists of this model agree on the relations between power and domination and the relationship between schooling and the economy. Power is defined and examined in terms of its function to mediate and legitimate the relations of dominance and subordination in the economic sphere. Power, in this perspective, is operated by dominant groups to reproduce class, gender and racial inequalities. Bowles and Gintis point out that schooling functions to inculcate students with the attitudes and dispositions necessary to accept the social and economic imperatives of a capitalist economy. In effect, schools perpetuate not only the social division of labour but also the wider society's class structure.

(2) Cultural-Reproductive Model

The main concern of this model is to develop a sociology of schooling that links culture, class and domination. The mediating role of culture in reproducing class societies is emphasized. Bourdieu argues against the notion that schools simply mirror the dominant society. Instead schools are relative autonomous institutions that are influenced only directly by more powerful economic and political institutions.

Bourdieu also suggests the notion of cultural capital to explain the cultural reproduction function within schools. By culture capital it means 'the different sets

of linguistic and cultural competencies that individuals inherit by way of the class-located boundaries of their family'. Education plays a particularly important role in legitimating and reproducing dominant cultural capital and therefore it is regarded as an important social and political force in the process of class reproduction.

Pierre Bourdieu suggests 'a theory of schooling in which he attempts to link the notions of structure and human agency through an analysis of the relationships among dominant culture, school knowledge and individual biographies'.

According to this theory, schools tend to legitimize certain forms of knowledge which in turn not only legitimize the interests and values of the dominant classes, but also have the effect of marginalizing or disconfirming other kinds of knowledge, particularly knowledge important to feminists, the working class, and minority groups. There is a distinction between high-status (theoretical subjects) and low-status (practical subjects) knowledge. Since the knowledge of the working class is considered as different and inferior, it is excluded from the curriculum.

Bourdieu's work is significant in that it not only provides a theoretical model for understanding aspects of schooling processes and social control. It is equally significant to add a new dimension to analyze the hidden curriculum by pointing out that 'individuals from different social groups and classes undergo processes of socialization that are not only intellectual but also emotional, sensory, and physical' (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985: p.83).

(3) Hegemonic-State Reproductive Model

The main focus of this model is on the complex role of state intervention in the educational system. However, there are significant differences among the theorists as to what the state actually is, how it works, and what the precise relationship is between the state and capital, on the one hand, and the state and education on the other.

Citing Gramsci, Aronowitz and Giroux attempt to offer a clear definition of hegemony. First, it refers to a process of domination whereby a ruling class exercises control through its intellectual and moral leadership over allied classes. Second, it refers to the dual use of force and ideology to reproduce societal relations between dominant classes and subordinate groups. Gramsci strongly emphasizes the role of ideology as an active force used by dominant classes to shape and incorporate the common sense views, needs, and interests of subordinate groups. In this sense, hegemony is something more than the mere exercise of coercion.

Giroux then introduces Gramsci's definition of state which has two specific realms: political society and civil society. He also introduces Gramsci's notion of power which can be manifested as positive and negative forces. The former functions in the repressive and ideological apparatuses of the government and civil society to reproduce the relations of domination. The latter functions positively as a feature of active opposition and struggle, the terrain on which men and women question, act and refuse to be incorporated into the logic of capital and its institutions.

Giroux further points out that, as part of the state apparatus, schools play a major role in furthering the economic interests of the dominant classes. He summarizes the instances in which the state intervenes to influence this process.

For example, the state intervenes to make a distinction between high-status knowledge and low-status knowledge, influence the methods of inquiry, and research work. State intervention also takes place in the development of curricula, classroom social relations, formulation of educational policy as well as the production of knowledge (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985: pp.88-89).

2.2.5. Schooling and the Theories of Resistance

Owing to the limited gains of the reproduction theory, theorists begin to take the concept of conflict and resistance as starting points for their analyses. They have sought to redefine the importance of mediation, power and culture in understanding the complex relations between schools and the dominant society.

Central to theories of resistance is the tensions and conflicts that mediate relationships among home, school and workplace. Aronowitz and Giroux quote Willis' study of a group of working class males who constitute the 'counterculture' in an English secondary school to reject the dominant ideology. According to Aronowitz and Giroux, there is a dialectical model of domination: the tension between dominant culture and the resistant ideology.

Another feature of resistance theories is the emphasis on the importance of culture and cultural production through the active, ongoing, collective medium of oppressed groups experiences. Apart from this, resistance theories assign an active role to human agency and experience as key mediating links between structural determinants and lived effects. Since the dominant ideologies are often contradictory, the notion of ideological domination as all-encompassing and unitary in its form and content is rejected (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985: p.99).

Resistance, according to Aronowitz and Giroux, is a valuable theoretical and ideological construct that provides an important focus for analyzing the relationship between school and the wider society. It also provides a new means for understanding the complex ways in which subordinate groups experience educational failure which is different from traditional explanation. By introducing the notion of resistance, the oppressed are not seen as being simply passive in the face of domination and the power exercised is never unidimensional (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985: p.107).

The transmission of knowledge is regarded as the imposition of a class ideology on the oppressed classes and therefore it is class bound. Knowledge is carefully selected, arranged and even produced to serve the interests of the dominant class. However, by emphasizing the oppositional behaviour, resistance theory suggests the dialectical relations between dominant culture and resistance ideology. The interpretation and production of knowledge are not limited to the dominant class. The students are able to play an active part to produce their own culture which may be contradictory to dominant culture in the schooling process.

2.2.6. The New Sociology of Education

Whitty (1985) presents vividly the emergence and development of the new sociology of education in his book 'Sociology and School Knowledge'. In the 1950s and 1960s, when structural-functionalism was the dominant theoretical paradigm, sociologists were concerned with the problem of increasing access to schooling rather than examining the nature of the education. It was assumed that 'education was taken for granted as a "good"' which was 'in the interests of both individuals and the national economy' (Whitty, 1985: p.9). During those days, education was also regarded as a means to encourage social mobility.

Although Raymond Williams had pointed out that curriculum expressed a compromise between inherited selection of interests and the emphasis of new interests, it was not until the early 1970s that more sociologists started to focus upon the nature and content of the curriculum. Bernstein points out that the content and the social organization of the curriculum were no longer being taken for granted. Musgrove states that 'within a school and within the wider society subjects are communities of people, competing and collaborating with one another, defining their boundaries, demanding allegiance from their members and conferring a sense of identity upon them' (Whitty, pp.12-13). Therefore curriculum should not be considered as neutral and apolitical as it may reflect the interests of social classes (Apple, 1995: p. 37).

Nevertheless, one of the most important contributions to the development of a new approach was the publication of "Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education" edited by Michael F. D. Young. According to Gorbett, Young and his collaborators have established a new paradigm in the sociology of education which has significant implications for the study of three related areas: educational knowledge, the categories of educators and classroom interaction. In introducing the main features of the new approach, Gorbett states that ' Within the perspective it proposes, society is conceived of in broad terms as being socially constructed, sustained and changed through the ongoing interaction of men. The relationship between man and society is a dialectical one and is essentially dynamic.' 'Man constantly makes his world in that he is continually faced with the problem of constructing his social reality, of making sense of the world. Socialization, which occurs throughout the life cycle in all social situations, is conceived of as a reciprocal process in which teachers and students may influence each other.

In talking about the construction of knowledge, Gorbett agrees to the ideas of Berger and Luckman that all knowledge is socially constructed and ideological. Young also echoes by pointing out 'The out-there-ness of the content of what is taught, whether it be as subjects, forms of enquiry, topics or ways of knowing, is very much part of the educators' 'taken for granted world'. The task of sociology of education should be related to the 'prevailing principles of selection and organization that underlie curricular to their institutional and interactional setting in schools and classrooms and to the wider social structure' (Young, 1971: p.40). The study of educational knowledge is a study of ideology which 'sometimes refers to the knowledge actually transmitted by means of the curriculum and sometimes refers to the underlying principles upon which knowledge is selected for inclusion in the curriculum' (Whitty, p.42).

Steed argues that studies of the curriculum should not 'neglect the meanings which people give to the situations in which they find themselves.' Vulliamy similarly argues that the curriculum should not be seen as 'an objective reality independent of teachers and learners but rather as the product of teachers' and pupils' everyday practices in the classroom'. The new sociology of education thus encouraged the studies of the complexity of the processes so that the discrepancies between the assumptions revealed by the statements of educational aims and those revealed by teachers' classroom practices, and the actual features of classroom interaction can be discerned (Whitty, p.47).

The above perspectives mainly draw attention to the content of schooling, the internal operation of schools as well as relations between schools and the social structure. Since the macrosociological approaches are inadequate to explain differential academic achievement and inequality in education (Karabel & Halsey,

1977: pp.44-45), the new sociology of education shifts the focus to the study of process of schooling with special emphasis on knowledge reproduction, resistance, state intervention and mediation of power. Among the scholars, Apple is particularly interested in understanding the process of schooling.

According to Apple, in studying the schooling process, three basic elements have to be examined:

- (1) 'the day to day interactions and regularities of the hidden curriculum that tacitly teach important norms and values
- (2) the formal corpus of school knowledge (the overt curriculum) that is planned and found in various materials and texts and filtered through teacher and
- (3) the fundamental perspectives that educators use to plan, organize and evaluate what happens in schools' (Apple, 1995: p.19).

To Apple, there is a need to interpret schooling as a system of both production and reproduction. He criticizes both human capital theorists and allocation theorists for ignoring the role of the school and points out the need to look at schools as productive apparatus in two ways. First, schools 'help to produce agents for positions outside the school in the economic sector of the society'. Second, schools help to 'produce the cultural forms needed by this same economic sector' (Apple, 1995). Schools intend to legitimate ideologies of dominant classes. But it is impossible to understand schooling without examining the complex and contradictory roles schools play (Apple, 1995: p.20).

During the process of schooling, teachers occupy a central role in legitimating school knowledge and sustaining prevailing and conservative definitions of curriculum content. Eggleston asserts that teachers' own

consciousness can be conservative as they legitimate existing constraints. But on the other hand, the greater autonomy for teachers in curriculum decision-making has placed them in a 'position of potential power' so substantial educational and social changes will emanate from changes in teacher consciousness. Therefore, whether teachers act as conservative or liberating forces depends, to some extent, on the teachers' consciousness.

However, Whitty points to another way. He stresses the importance of broader political context in determining school knowledge other than the assumptions and activities of individuals or small groups in interaction. He continues to point out the constraints of positivistic sociology in making the school knowledge opaque, fixed and immutable and denying human subjectivity and role of human agency in the production of knowledge. Besides, there are the state intervention, both direct and indirect, and the control of school examinations. Therefore, changes have been extremely limited (Whitty, pp.55 & 70).

Young distinguishes 'curriculum as fact' with 'curriculum as practice' when he discusses the nature of knowledge and its manifestation. He regards any concept of 'curriculum as fact' as epistemologically mistaken in that it is based on a mystification of the true nature of knowledge as a feature of human relations (Whitty, p. 57). 'Curriculum as practice' refers to knowledge which is accomplished in the collaborative work of teachers and pupils. Under the 'culture of positivism' the curriculum as fact has obscured knowledge as socially constructed.

School knowledge is also socially selected and organized, both in form and content (Apple, 1995: p. 28). According to Apple and King, 'the overt and covert knowledge found within school settings and the principles of selection,

organization and evaluation of this knowledge are valiative selections from a much large universe of possible knowledge and collection principles'. They must not be accepted as given and should be scrutinized to discern the social and economic ideologies.

Schools are expected to serve both an economic function and an ideological one. In order to explain this, Whitty uses case studies of school music, physics and domestic science. He argues that what is taught in schools acts as a means of social control and serves to sustain the status quo (Whitty, 1985).

2.2.7. Paulo Freire's View on Schooling Process

Freire points out that schooling is not neutral in that, on the one hand, it is a process designed to reproduce and legitimate the prevailing, dominant consciousness in the existing culture, but on the other hand, actors in a school should be able to 'generate their own meanings and frame of reference and able to develop their self-determining powers through their ability to perform a critical reading of reality so that they can act on that reality' (Giroux, 1981: p.130).

Knowledge, according to Freire, is also not neutral and it should not be regarded as the acquisition of a body of information. It was a kind of cultural capital reflecting the interests and values of dominant classes. Freire further states that knowledge is seen as an active force that is used by the learner to make sense of his 'life-world' and liberation begins with the recognition that knowledge is ideological and political, inextricably tied to human interests and norms.

In Freire's opinion, the act of knowing is both a questioning attitude and a specific set of social relationships. All educational experience begins with

questions concerning the meaning and nature of knowledge itself. And knowledge has to be defined through the social mediations and roles that provide the context for its meaning and its mode of production (Giroux, 1981: p. 133).

It is interesting to examine, in the light of the above theories, the schooling process of a school for girls, the form and content of curriculum, the hidden curriculum as well as the ways knowledge was produced and transmitted. The roles played by individual teachers and students and the influence of external environment and competing ideology will also be examined. After reviewing the theories of education, the historical context of the study will be presented in the next chapter.

2.3. Benefits of Schooling

It is a never-ending controversy concerning the benefits of schooling. There are different points of view on the welfare and advantages that schooling brings to individuals. Some stress the importance to prepare men of talents and labours with different skills for national economic development while others say that it is equally essential to make the society function with citizens playing different roles. Some scholars point out that investment in education is to produce human capital which is significant to both individuals and national development.

Clabaugh and Rozycki (1990) suggest that one of the most fundamental distinctions one can make with respect to school benefits is that they range along a continuum from absolute to positional.

Absolute benefits retain their value no matter how many people acquire them. For instance, to the extent that knowledge itself is a benefit, that benefit is undiminished by the number of children who enjoy it. Positional benefits are very

different. They lose their value as more people acquire them. For example, in school 'A's' are positional benefits. If everyone had them on the report cards their value will be reduced to nothing by grade inflation. Similarly, a high school diploma and a teachers certificate also belong to the positional benefits (Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990, pp.16-17)

'Benefits also occur along a continuum from the divisible to the indivisible. Divisible benefits are those that some people can enjoy without sharing with others'. A lovely house or a high school diploma belongs to it. 'Indivisible benefits, on the other hand, are those benefits that must be enjoyed by all if they are to be enjoyed by any' benefits (Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990, p.17).

'Schooling conveys a mixture of both divisible and indivisible benefits. On the one hand, we can easily teach some persons to read without bothering to teach everyone, Similar, some can earn bachelors degrees while others do without them. Clearly, the sorts of school benefits are divisible. On the other hand, if a nation is better schooled it is likely to be more prosperous and better governed; and these benefits are less divisible. Finally, if, through schooling, human beings could be convinced to be more careful with our planet, the benefits that would accrue would be indivisible' (Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990, p.17).

2.3.1. Structural-Functionalist Theory

Structural-Functionalism approaches the benefits of schooling from a societal point of view. It assumes that 'society and institutions within society, such as education, are made up of interdependent parts all working together, each contributing some necessary activity to the functioning of the whole society

(Ballantine, 1997: p.6). Thus, as an institution within society, school is responsible for the socialization of the young with an object 'to enable them to possess and perpetuate a set of common physical skills, intellectual knowledge and ethical values' (Durkheim, 1985: p.21). The acquisition of these skills, knowledge and values by the young is important to the maintenance of social order and cohesion. It is in this way schooling contributes to the functioning of a society.

According to Durkheim and Parsons, a school should provide different and more highly specialized knowledge and skills for the young so that they can play different roles in a society (Durkheim, 1985; p.21; Parsons, 1985: pp.180-182). Schooling also enables the child to emotionally separate from the family and learn to internalize a set of cultural values and norms that are broader than those learned from the family alone (Parsons, 1985: p.191). A benefit of schooling is that through schooling children learn to function in the larger society as adults. They can also learn that people can be grouped according to such criteria as age, sex, interest and level of competencies and be rewarded differently according to different achievements (Pai & Adler, 1997: p.144). This helps to perpetuate the established social, cultural, economic and political structures and norms.

Robert Dreeben suggests another benefit of schooling by pointing out that the social experiences available to children in schools are uniquely suited for preparing their transition from life in the family to occupation and life in the larger society. Such experiences and norms include independence, achievement, universalism and specificity (Dreeben, 1977: p.544; Pai & Adler, 1997: pp.144-146). According to Dreeben, independence means 'acting self-sufficiently, and handling tasks with which under different circumstances, one can rightfully expect the help of others'. Achievement refers to outstanding performance not only in curricular activities but also in extra-curricular activities. Universalism refers to a

way in which a person is placed in a particular group according to a set of standards or common characteristics he or she shares with other members of that group. Specificity stands for treating an individual in a group as a unique case because he or she possesses certain traits that differ from those shared by other group members (Pai & Adler, 1997: pp.144-146). By acquiring these norms the children will become a full member of the society.

Structural-functional theorists tend to focus their research on questions concerning the structure and functioning of organization. Seldom do they pay heed to individual motivations and interactions such as the classroom dynamics of teacher-student or student-student interactions. They also fail to recognize the presence of divergent interests, ideologies and conflicting interest groups in the society (Ballantine, 1997: p.8). By treating education as an institution within society, schooling is just a means of transmission of skills, knowledge and values to the students who are expected to fill in different roles in the society. Education is in the main a way to legitimate the existing social and political order. They see benefits of education from the societal point of view rather than from individual point of view and therefore benefits to individuals are seldom recognized. Dreeben does raise some norms that individuals learn during the process of schooling, but he sees them more as something indispensable to the functioning of the social system than as personal benefits. He also disregards the existence of other values and different motivations of students by limiting to the norms mentioned above. The inadequacy of structural-functional approach to explain the benefits of schooling from individual perspective suggest the need to have micro study of schooling processes.

2.3.2. Human Capital Theory

While the structural-functionalist theorists regard education as a means to maintain the equilibrium of the society, the advocates of human capital theory point out that investment in human capital not only increases individual productivity but also lays the technical base of the type of labour force necessary for economic growth. Theodore W. Schultz (1977) states that the process of acquiring skills and knowledge through education is not to be viewed as a form of consumption, but rather as a productive investment. 'By investing in themselves, people can enlarge the range of choice available to them. It is the way free men can enhance their welfare' (Schultz, 1977: p.314) Schultz raises some examples to illustrate that much of what we call consumption constitutes investment in human capital. They include direct expenditures on education, health and internal migration to take advantage of better job opportunities, on-the-job training as well as the use of leisure time to improve skills and knowledge (Schultz, 1971: pp.24-25). In doing so, people improve their quality and productivity.

From this perspective, labourers can be considered capitalists, for their investment in the acquisition of knowledge and skills has given them ownership of economically valuable capacities (Karabel & Halsey, 1977: p. 307). Thurow (1970) defines human capital as an individual's productive skills, talents and knowledge. He also highlights the importance of investment in human capital for increases in skill, talents and knowledge have proved to be major contributors to economic growth and elimination of poverty (Thurow, 1970: pp.1-2).

Although the scientific values and assumptions of the human capital theory are questioned, the influence of the human capital approach on social policy extended beyond the advanced capitalist countries into the nations of the Third World in the 1960s. Even the socialist countries were equally influenced by the

theory and were concerned to reorganize their educational systems so as to promote economic growth (Karabel & Halsey, 1977: pp.14-15).

A decade later, the assumptions of the human capital theory began to be questioned because of policy failures both in the American 'war on poverty' and in the attempts to promote economic growth in the Third World. One of the weaknesses of the theory was that it failed to provide insight into what was going on in the 'black box' of education that would explain its correlation with earnings. This inattention to the schooling process greatly undermined the explanatory power of the human capital theory (Karabel & Halsey, 1977: pp.15-16).

Human capital theory assumes that, by investing in education, both the individuals and the society may receive benefits. Improvement in human resources leads to economic growth and removal of poverty. Individuals may also increase the opportunity of better return through investment in education. However, these benefits are measured from the economic perspective. The theory fails to identify and explain the intrinsic value of receiving education which may be quite different from economic gains and vary among individuals.

2.3.3. Education and State Formation

Andy Green (1990) relates the growth of education with state formation and points out that the benefit of developing education by the state is that it can 'provide the state with trained administrators, engineers and military personnel; to spread dominant national cultures and inculcate popular ideologies of nationhood; and so to forge the political and cultural unity of burgeoning nation states and cement the ideological hegemony of their dominant classes' (Green, 1990: p.308).

schooling, in this way, helps to exercise national control and enhance national cohesion.

Green further states that the formation of national education systems occurred first and fastest in countries where the process of state formation was most intensive. Green suggests three historical factors to explain this phenomenon. Those states regarded education could provide such benefits of strengthening national defense against enemies, facilitating national reconstruction after revolutions as well as escaping from relative economic underdevelopment. This phenomenon not only took place in some European nations but also in any country undergoing national reconstruction after war or successful struggles for independence (Green, 1990: p.310), for example, the new American state after the break with England.

Carnoy and Samoff (1990), in their study of the relationship between education and the political and social transformation of the socialist states, also point out the prime importance of education. Despite conflicts and contradictions may arise during the process of development, state control of education is generally considered indispensable to the creation of a legitimate transition state and transition society (Carnoy & Samoff, 1990; p.37). Transition state refers to a country in its transitional period from the conditioned capitalist state to the socialist state.

From the societal point of view, schooling not only helps maintain equilibrium and status quo of a social system which is regarded as important by some people but also help promote social harmony by integrating individuals into the system. Schooling also facilitates the reproduction of social relations among different classes so that conflicts can be reduced. Moreover, by investing in

education, both the individuals and the state receive benefits. The former increase the personal competitiveness while the latter has more human capital for economic development. The positive consequences of schooling have been identified by most states in their processes of state formation and by some transition states in their establishment of socialist states. Below a discussion on the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of schooling on individuals will be conducted. And the benefits discussed are selective rather than exhaustive.

2.3.4. Benefits from Individual Points of View

Education may bring about many benefits to individuals. Some of them are intrinsic ones such as attainment of literacy and knowledge, the training of critical and reflective thinking, the sense of aesthetic, appreciation from others and a sense of self-worth etc. Some are extrinsic ones like more opportunity to further education, improvement in socio-economic status, more opportunity of employment, upward social mobility and more earnings in latter days. Some of them are more conspicuous than others and the importance of them to individuals varies with time, space and individuals. In a word, it is impossible to exhaust all of them as benefits of schooling to individual can be very different among persons.

In studying the social mobility and stratification in the Ming and Qing dynasties, Ho (1961) points out that education was one of the most important determinants of social status which closely linked with the Chinese officialdom (Ho, 1961, p.42). Education was an instrument for people to move upwards along the social ladder as they could compete with one another in the civil service examination. The Chinese parents always placed importance on education of boys and hoped that one day they would succeed in gaining a title via the examination. Even today, this kind of thought remains unchanged.

To be educated and then succeed in the civil examination not only gained respect and appreciation from the people, it would bring about a lot of material benefits in China. Ho quotes the example of Fan Chin to illustrate the point (Ho, 1961, p.43). Of course, it was also a source of power and authority as successful candidates were usually appointed high-ranking posts in the state bureaucracy. Officials enjoyed high social status in the Chinese society and education was the way to enter the officialdom. The importance of education was beyond question.

According to the theory of human capital, investment in education is not just a form of consumption, it is also individually productive. The acquisition of knowledge and skill has given a person ownership of economically valuable capacities (Halsey & Karabel, 1977, p. 307). It points out that education really brings about personal benefits. In fact, a positive correlation between education and income has been demonstrated in many countries, and the fact that education help contributes to the increase in productivity and raise the competitiveness of a person in the labour market (Halsey & Karabel, 1977, p. 309).

Bourdieu points out that schooling may offer three forms of capital to students namely cultural, social and economic capitals. The first kind is economic capital, which can immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights (Bourdieu, 1998, p.47).

Education helps to impose cultural reproduction by which students inherit 'the different sets of linguistic and cultural competencies' that are useful to them. This is the notion of cultural capital. Moreover, the learning of the 'high-status' subjects paves the way for students to move upwards in the society.

Bourdieu further states that schooling also bestowed social capital to students. By social capital, he means, 'the aggregate of actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized and recognition- or in other words, to membership of a group- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-own capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in various senses of the word' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.51).

Freire states that knowledge is seen as an active force that is used by the learner to make sense of his 'life-world' and liberation begins with the recognition that knowledge is ideological and political, inextricably tied to human interests and norms (Giroux, 1981: p.130). Whether the respondents, after receiving knowledge, put these ideas into effect in their life will be of great interest.

With the unequal distribution of middle schools between urban and rural areas and the limited opportunity for girls in receiving education in China in the 1930s, the four respondents under study were the fortunate minority. They enjoyed many favourable factors that were not available to most of the girls, especially those in the rural areas. They belonged to elitist group in the country and they could acquire a complete formal schooling which was denied to most people. Therefore, it is interesting to examine what are the outcomes of education for them.

2.4. The Question of Applicability

It must be pointed out that the above theories were formulated in the context of western countries and developed out of the experiences of the western world. They cannot be fully applied to explain the Chinese society. However, they can serve as heuristic aids which may facilitate the researcher's 'grasp upon and

comprehension of an amorphous and ceaselessly flowing reality and assist the clear conceptualization of the particular case or development under investigation' In addition, these theories may offer hypotheses that can be tested against specific cases and developments (Kalberg, 1994: p.93).

In using the above-mentioned theories, the following limitations must be borne in mind:

- (1) The sociological theories are developed in the western countries where the most advanced capitalistic systems are found. The complex relations within such capitalistic economies are different from that of China, e.g. the relations arising from the class structures. Since China in the 1920s and 1930s was mainly an agrarian society with most urban population in the cities along the coast, some of the developments those theories seek to explain may not exist in Chinese society. Even in the cities, a mature capitalistic society had not be formed in the 1920s and therefore, limitations can be imagined. The focus of the theory is on the social structure rather than the activities of agents also undermines its power to explain the meaning of individual actions and the process of social events.
- (2) Structural-functionalism presupposes the existing of a social equilibrium as it seeks to explain relationship between the whole and the parts. However, in 1920s, China was in constant flux as a result of internal instability and external encroachment, the status-quo oriented nature of the theory might be inadequate in explaining the China case satisfactorily. The reproduction and resistance theories may also suffer from the fact that the source of power was not confined to the state in China. There were other power bases and competing ideologies that exercised power and exert influence on the agents. Therefore, reproduction and resistance may not take the forms of those present in the advanced capitalist societies.

- (3) The new sociology of education stresses the schooling process and the construction of curriculum and knowledge in modern capitalist societies. However, the organization of curriculum and knowledge might be a result of external factors such as the presence of imperial powers and foreign enemies. It was not simply a result of negotiation different social classes in China.
- (4) The last but not least, any transfer and application of social theories may face the problem of cultural differences. China is a country with long history and rich tradition which may be different from most western democracies. Since some of the theories are culture-bound, irrelevancies cannot be avoided. Besides, overarching theories tend to ignore specificity and particularities, micro theories seldom pay due attention to major trends and structural forces. It is not easy to strike a balance.

There may be limitations of the theories, but they still contribute to explain aspects of social phenomena when duly employed. As mentioned above, they are heuristic aids which help delimit the areas of attention and interest, and provide frameworks of analysis for researchers. And it is believed that they may help explain the relationship between schools and the wider society, the processes of schooling and the organization of curriculum and lived experiences of the agents involved.

CHAPTER THREE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In order to put the study in a historical context, a development of women's education in the history of China is introduced. In the first place, a description of the development of women education in ancient China is offered. The factors that had limited women's opportunity are presented. The next section is a description of women education in China in the nineteenth century. The changes in women education since the opening of China in 1842 are discussed. Its development was first spurred by the coming of the missionaries who established hospitals, orphanages and schools for the Chinese. The first school for girls was started in Ningbo in 1843. With the passing of time more of the same type of schools were set up.

The efforts of the native Chinese to extend schooling to girls dated back to the end of the nineteenth century when some of the scholars advocated the setting up of modern schools for girls. The government initiative came even later. The first national education system of China was first adopted in 1903 but education for girls was not included until 1907. Lastly, a portrait of the First School for Girls in Guangzhou is given to locate the present study.

3.1 Women's Education in China before 1942

Chen Dongyuan points out that there was no formal education for girls in ancient China (Chen, 1937). There was only girl education in the sense that they received skills, languages and Confucian morals from their mothers. It was a form of socialization that took place in homes and clans. The purpose of education was to train them up to meet the moral standard of 'a virtuous mother and a good wife'. To achieve this, women had to develop such virtues as obedience, timidity,

reticence and adaptability. This kind of education remained unchanged until the end of the nineteenth century. Similar ideas were still found in Liang Qichao's proposal to promote education for women as he suggested reviving tradition of the past (Chen, 1937: pp.325-326). However, Ko (1994) emphasizes that this is not a complete picture of Chinese educated women in the seventeenth century. Ko employs Bourdieu's concepts of 'official power' and 'dominated power' to explain the power relations between men and women. Women were able to wield real power in the family (Ko, 1994: p.10). Ko also points out that although the early development of Chinese family was characterized with patrilineality, filial piety and patriarchy, the expression of them 'varied with time, place and the social background of the men concerned' (Ko, 1994: p.11). Therefore, Ko does not accept an over-simplistic picture and tries to reconstruct the real life of women in the seventeenth century Jiangnan.

Another scholar states that a girl faced inequality when she was born. Usually she was the victim of infanticide (Lee, 1981). Even though she had a chance to grow up, she was unable to study as the boys did. The education for a girl was confined to her home which might be her only world until she got married. The identity of a girl was defined by the role she played: a daughter, a wife, a daughter-in-law, a concubine, a widow, a mother or a mother-in-law.

After studying the *wu-ching* or Five Classics, Guisso (1981) states that they 'are not much interested in the nature of real women, nor, of course, in the nature of men. They took the short step to prescriptiveness in their view of women, and so determined the position of Chinese women would occupy until times.' According to the Five Classics, male and female are as different as heaven and earth, yang and yin. They are inextricably connected, each assigned a dignified and respectable role and each expected to interact in cooperation and harmony. However, the

relationship was not an equal one. In order to solve the inequality arising from it, there were three ways: separation of function, acknowledgement of hierarchy, and the idealistic injunction that mutual love and respect would be infused into the relationship. But behind all these assumed the inferior position of female, Ko states that it is not appropriate to take the separation and distinction between men and women for granted, at least in the seventeenth century. 'The formula of separation is more prescriptive of an ideal norm than descriptive of the realities of gender interactions' (Ko, 1994: p.12). She further suggests the concept of inner-outer continuum to situate the lives of Chinese women (Ko, p.13).

The women of ancient China accepted their status out of conditioning and training. They were socialized to accept inferiority and the roles assigned to them by Confucianism and tradition. This situation was gradually crystallized with in later dynasties, especially Song and Ming Dynasties. However, Ko points out that on the surface the late Ming (1573-1644) and early Qing (1644-1722) periods were a dark age of tightening restrictions for women, but in reality it was also the best of times because women displayed vitality in domestic and social lives. Moreover, women in the seventeenth century even enjoyed greater degree of informal power and social freedom (Ko, pp.9-10). Thus, Ko calls for a need to 'pay as much attention to the everyday lives and self-perceptions of women as to overarching structures of domination' (Ko, p.10).

In studying women and culture in the seventeenth century, Ko points out that there emerged a group of women reader-writer. What made it possible were the transition of the Jiangnan economy into a thorough monetarized one, the blooming publishing industry, and the growth in the number of education women with expanded opportunities for them to interact with one another and with society at large (Ko, 1994:p.29). Ko's analysis is significant in that it gives a more dynamic

picture of gender relations and men-women power relations. It points to the direction of studying Chinese women 'on the basis of concrete knowledge of how men and women lived, how they viewed their lives, as well as the manifold ways in which prevailing ideologies impinged upon their lives and perceptions' (Ko, p.11). In addition, it offers a clearer picture of women's education in the history of China by pointing out that women's educational opportunity was not as limited as it has been assumed.

Witke (1970) summarizes in her dissertation the sources of change in attitudes toward women in China up to the May Fourth period. Through her study, a clearer picture of the status and situation of women can be discerned. She first delineates the image of women from ancient China to the modern era, highlighting some of the critical stages in the changing role of women. Witke touches such issues about women as their participation in revolutionary movements, publication of journals to voice out their problems, demands for women suffrage and the struggle for emancipation from the control of both family and tradition. The hot issues of chastity, free love and marriage and education are also discussed. On the one hand, she intends to show the inferior position imposed upon women in the past, on the other hand, she wants to demonstrate that the position of women had been improving since the second half of the nineteenth century.

Witke concludes her study by saying that the youths (most often males), while raising the cause of women as the anti-traditional act, had helped to bring the oppressed position to the front. And judging by the great number of journals for or about women during the May Fourth Era, 'the women problem was not at all sectarian, or a women's problem alone'. In this aspect, the May Fourth Era can be regarded as an important stage in the improvement of women's position in modern China.

The debate on women's position during the May Fourth era had helped to popularize the demands and needs of women in education. Women issues became serious discussion among the scholars and attention of political parties later. This growing awareness of women's needs helped to form an impetus to extend educational opportunities to women at large.

Although the May Fourth Movement drew people's attention to the needs of Chinese women including educational needs, it served to present an inaccurate image of Chinese women. The image of victimized feudal women was portrayed to represent the backwardness of China and therefore there was an urgent need to modernize the country. And thus women's enlightenment became a prerequisite for the political liberation of China (Ko, 1994: p.2)

Ko further points out this was a consequence of a 'rare confluence of three divergent ideological and political traditions: the May Fourth New Cultural Movement, the Communist revolution, and Western feminist scholarship. They shared 'in their indignation over the cloistered, crippled, and subservient existence of women in old China' (Ko, 1994: p.3)

3.2. Development of Women Education in China, 1842-1930s

China's defeat in the two Opium Wars brought about great changes to China. Under the protection of unequal treaties, foreign missionaries came to settle in the treaty ports. Apart from evangelical work, they started to establish their mission schools which were set up in areas opened to them. Western-style education was introduced to girls who were recruited from lower strata of the society. Schooling was provided for girls for the first time in China. The appearance of mission

schools stimulated the setting up of private girls' schools sponsored by Chinese people. The introduction of government schools for girls came the latest. In the following sections, the developments of girls' education by mission schools; private schools and government efforts will be introduced respectively so as to put the present study in historical context.

3.2.1 The Contribution of Mission Schools

The defeat of China in the first Anglo-Chinese War in 1842 resulted in the opening of five treaty ports. Among the first group of foreigners who came to China were the diplomats, merchants and missionaries. Protestant missionaries first arrived at China and were immediately followed by the Catholic counterparts who attempted to revive their work. Apart from evangelical work, they also started schools to train Chinese preachers and children of the Chinese converts. It was also the missionaries who first provided girls with opportunity to study in schools. In 1844, Miss Aldersey started the first school for girls in Ningbo and there were eleven mission schools for girls in the treaty ports by 1860 (Lewis, 1972: p. 18).

In 1860, the Second Anglo-Chinese War came to an end with the signing of the Beijing Convention. Foreigners gained the privilege to travel and settle in the interior of China. Mission workers were also allowed to build churches, hospitals and schools in places away from the treaty ports. As they moved outside the main cities, they became vulnerable to assault by Chinese opposed to their intrusion. But it was also due to these moves that the girls in remote provinces were able to receive education.

Most of the schools were quite small establishments and were managed by single women. Students were recruited from poor families which found it difficult

to provide enough food and clothes for the children. In the mission schools, not only were no fees charged, but clothes, bedding, books and other articles of daily use were also provided. Mission schools usually required that the feet of girls be unbound and this was one of the reasons why they attracted so few students from gentry families (Cleverley, 1991: p.31).

When compared to the traditional education, mission schools provided a modern curriculum during the second half of the nineteenth century. Students needed to study Bible, Chinese, English, arithmetic, geography, history, sciences and Chinese classics. Later, music, physical education, health education were included. In the early twentieth century, the curriculum was changed as the curriculum of the West had been changed. Physical culture, general reading, elementary science, hygiene and domestic science were introduced (Lewis, p. 21).

Bible knowledge was given special emphasis in order to bring the girls more closely in touch with Christian doctrine and win them to Christian belief. Next to the Bible, Chinese language was the most important subject in mission schools. Hayhoe (1996) rightly remarks that 'The attitude toward the Chinese language, and Chinese subjects was utilitarian.' It would 'enable students to bring about the Christianization of China through their continuing connectedness to Chinese culture. Their intention to use Chinese learning for Western ends provides a fascinating antithesis to the utilitarianism of government schools, which proposed to use Western learning for purely Chinese purposes' (Hayhoe, 1996: p.39). The contents were similar with those taught in government schools. It was interesting to find that as a result of nationalizing the curriculum, English lost much of its importance until after the 1911 Revolution.

Science was greatly emphasized in mission schools because of its practical value in the development of modern China. The introduction of physical education was difficult because of foot-binding and the conservative attitude of the Chinese parents. However, it became more popular and acceptable with the pass of time. Music was another subject that had brought much joy to the student and mass singing was welcome with great enthusiasm. This enthusiasm over western music also brought a revival of Chinese tunes and renewed appreciation of skill in Chinese instruments. In 1935, the government added a course of military nursing to the senior middle schools conducted by teachers sent by the Department of Education (Anderson, 1943: pp. 279-291). Obviously, it was a response to the need of the state and society as Japanese encroachment was getting more and more pronounced throughout the 1930s.

Lewis (1972) points out that the influence of mission schools can be seen in the following aspects. In the first place, the mission schools had widened the horizon of the girls by extending modern education to them. There was a growing demand for women's education with the passing of time. And it was in this way that they helped to bring about the improvement in women's status in China. Second, the mission schools had provided a model for the Qing government and the native Chinese. What was more, the mission schools contributed a lot in preparing teachers not only for mission schools themselves, but also for the government and private schools. But the most remarkable contribution was that the mission schools helped to overcome the prejudice toward education of girls among the Chinese people (Lewis, p. 22-24). With the passage of time, the mission school became popular among the middle and upper classes. The expensive school fees excluded the girls from poor families. Mission schools for girls became more and more elitist in the sense that its education represented a social status.

Most of the mission schools were mainly concentrated in major treaty ports and coastal provinces. However, the Canadian Methodist Mission penetrated into the interior of China. Missionaries from Canada chose Sichuan to be their main theatre of evangelical and educational activities. Schools for girls were started there in the second half of the nineteenth century and they took a similar path of development as those in coastal areas. As a pioneer of extending western education and women education to the remote interior, the contribution of the Mission should not be underestimated (Lawrie, 1979).

In a study of the Catholic sisters' effort to raise the status of the Chinese women, Bradshaw (1981) not only introduces the religious and social services of Catholic sisters carried out in China but also touches upon the contribution of Catholic missionaries to women education (Bradshaw, 1981).

The number of Roman Catholic missionaries who came to China increased during the rule of the Mongol Empire in the thirteenth century. At the same time, there appeared two great new religious orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans (Latourette, 1929: pp.62-67). However, the collapse of the Mongols and the spread of Black Death temporarily halted the missionary work (Latourette, 1929: pp.73-74). Although Roman Catholic missionaries enjoyed another heyday of missionary work in early Qing, the long controversy over the rites thereafter and the persecution of emperor Kangxi caused another decline (Latourette, 1929: ch 8 & 9). The Catholic missionaries revived their religious activities after the Treaty of Nanjing was concluded in 1842. In 1846 the Vincentian Fathers brought the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul from France to Ningbo to work with the women. Later, they started orphanages, hospitals, asylums and schools. The sisters of the helpers of the Holy Souls were also sent to Shanghai from France in 1867. They established a mission compound consisting of a day school, a Pagan Girls' School,

a nursery, a dispensary, a school for the deaf and dumb, and a “home for half-witted.”

The Pagan Girls' School which was set up in 1904 was of special interest because it was started at the request of Chinese upper-class men in Shanghai. The western educated husbands wanted the sisters to teach their wives modern subjects. Later, the School also taught young women music, art and languages so that they could marry into upper-class homes (Bradshaw, 1981: pp. 202-3). As for the poor girls, they were able to improve their status and earn a better living by acquiring skills of teaching, nursing, health care and spiritual life as a result of the work of the Presentation Association (Presentadines) started in 1855 near Zikawei, outside Shanghai (Bradshaw, 1981: p. 202).

The Sisters of Providence from St. Mary-of-the-Woods was the first American community to send sisters to China. Besides religious work and social services, they started a school for girls in Kaifeng where secular subjects were taught. The girls who attended the school were encouraged to unbind their feet. The second group of American sisters to go to China was the Maryknoll Sisters, from New York State. The first six sisters arrived at Yanggong in southern Guangdong and were soon involved in such activities as teaching, operating dispensaries and orphanages, nursing, taking care of the women prisoners (Bradshaw, pp. 206-7).

The Catholic sisters had adopted a different approach to the education of women. Students were trained not only through formal schooling but also through social services to meet the needs of the Chinese people. Knowledge and skills that the women students learned could be put into practice and in return, through this process of actualization, they improved their social status. They had successfully

combined knowledge with action and brought enlightenment to the women in China.

3.2.2 The Private Schools for Girls

In 1897, the first school for girls, established and financed by the Chinese people, was opened in Shanghai. In 1898, a day school was added. In Tianjin, there were five girl schools under government supervision with an aggregate attendance of about 250 women and girls (Lewis, 1919: p.26). Although the government was slow in providing education for girls, it did nothing to hinder the establishment of schools by private citizens and prominent officials (Beahan, 1981: p.232).

One of the most famous schools was the Patriotic Girls' School established by Cai Yuanpei in Shanghai in 1902. The first students were female members of the families of the founders of the School. However, most of them dropped out later because of their family's duties. Cai then opened the enrollment to all girls and the number of students began to expand. The curriculum included such ideas as patriotism, liberalism and democracy, like the male counterpart, the Patriotic School. Military drills and physical education were also practiced to strengthen students' character (Rankin, p.68). The School had contributed to radicalize the girls who were going to take part in revolutionary activities later. From 1901 to 1906, there were eleven girl schools in Shanghai. Similar schools were also set up in Tianjin and Beijing. Among them was the Ching Tsun School in Tianjin, managed entirely by the graduates of a Girl Normal School (Lewis, p.26).

Among the officials who supported women education was Yuan Shih-kai, the governor-general of Chihli. In 1905, Yuan memorialized in support of establishing schools for girls. It was probably a move to meet the public demands

so as to elicit support for reforms. Under Yuan, Chihli was famous for its educational institutions for girls. Of the reported 400 native schools for girls in China reported by the Ministry of Education in 1907, 121 were in Chihli. (Beahan, p.233) Therefore, prominent officials had played an important part in expanding schooling opportunity for girls although some of them held different opinions on the curriculum provided.

After the 1911 Revolution, an even greater impetus was given to girl education as many wealthy citizens founded girl schools as an evidence of patriotism (Lewis, 1919: p26). One of the main features of these private girl schools during this period was that they offered practical courses for girls such as satchel making, embroidery, lace work, pasteboard work and drawing. Others offered such courses as silk culture, raising silkworms, unraveling cocoons, spinning, tailing, cooking, weaving rushes and artificial flower making (Lewis, 1919: p. 27). Obviously, they were preparing a different path for girls by offering an education vocational in nature.

It was not an easy task to set up a private girl school as there were many limitations to its development at that time. In the documents compiled by Li and Zhang (1975), such problems as the lack of fund, the inability to enroll students, and the shortage of experienced teachers and headmasters were summarized. A case was provided by the establishment and running of the Patriotic School. Cai Yuanpei, the first Principal of the School, had to face financial uncertainties and rely on donations to keep the School running (Rankin, p.65). With the formation of a national education system at the turn of twentieth century, many of these schools had become incorporated as government schools (Lewis, 1919: p.28).

3.2.3 The Government Efforts in Girls' Education

Following the establishment of girl schools by native Chinese people was the appearance of government schools for girls. In ancient China, the court was not responsible for the formal education of the masses. The duty was given to the *sishu* set up by scholars and members of the clans. However, there was education for the members of the royal family and the teachers who were very often the most outstanding scholars of the days.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Qing government faced the twin evils of internal rebellions and external encroachment. In order to strengthen the central government schools against these challenges, reforms were carried out by the government and provincial leaders. Some of the officials realized the superiority of western science and technology so they established schools to train students with western methods. The modern schools established between 1861 and 1894 fell into seven categories: (1) schools to train interpreters and foreign affairs specialists; (2) schools to train engineers and skilled workmen for the new ship yards and arsenals; (3) the naval academies; (4) military academies; (5) a naval and military medical school; and (7) a school of mining engineering (Biggerstaff, 1961, p.31). They should be regarded as the forerunners of government schools in modern China.

The three schools to train interpreters and experts in foreign affairs – the Beijing, the Shanghai and the Canton Language schools were the first modern government schools opened in China. The students of these schools were drawn mainly from the male Eight Banners so no girl was admitted.

These modern government schools were generally regarded as training schools as education students received was specifically related to national defense,

either military or diplomatic. Besides the Beijing Tongwenguan, no liberal arts education equivalent to the West was provided. Thus, the provision of general education for the youths remained the monopoly of the traditional schools until after 1895 (Biggerstaff, pp.75-76).

The defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) resulted in a growing dissatisfaction with the backwardness of the country among the newly developing business class and the young literati who pressed for educational reform. And the consequence was the appearance under official auspices of new and broader modern institutions. For examples, the *Zhongxi Xuetaang* (Sino-Western School) and *Nanyang gongxue* (Southern Public School) were opened in Tianjin and Shanghai respectively in 1896 and 1897 by Sheng Hsuanhuai (Biggerstaff, p.76). The latter was one of the first modern schools to send students to study in Japan (Rankin, 1971: p.62). Another example was the setting up of the Imperial University of Beijing which introduced liberal arts education of the western pattern. However, girls were not able to share any of the advantages bestowed by the above educational development as they were still excluded from these educational institutions.

In 1901, the edict of the Empress Dowager Cixi permitted the establishment of girls' school in China. However, it was not until 1907 were schools for girls definitely and officially provided for by the government (Lewis, 1919: p.28).

In the educational system promulgated by the Manchu government in 1902, there was no place for girls' education. The changes introduced in the educational system were merely nominal. Girl's education was combined with home education in that the women were provided with knowledge to take care of their children. And the general attitude towards girls studying in schools was still rather

conservative. One example was Zhang Zhidong's proposal to exclude girls from public education in the 1904 school regulations (Borthwick, 1983: p.115). It was generally believed that once girls received modern education, the social environment would be deteriorated (Saneto, 1982: p.35).

In 1907, the Chinese government issued thirty-six regulations for girls' normal schools and twenty regulations for girls' elementary schools. This meant that girls' education was first recognized in the government educational system of China. Some of the salient points could be noted as follows:

- (1) The highest educational institute for girls was the normal school. There were neither middle schools nor colleges for women definitely established by the government.
- (2) The period for girls' elementary schools and normal schools was one year less than that for boy.
- (3) Education for boys and girls was entirely separate (Tang, 1923).

In order to make the education of girls more possible, boys and girls were allowed to attend the same school in the lower elementary grades. However, boys and girls were required to form separate classes in higher primary schools.

It was pointed out that this education system was still unfavourable to girls in that they did not enjoy any opportunity to continue their education in the middle and higher educational institutions. Also they were not permitted to participate in sports, drama and public parades. And the purpose of schooling was still that of turning them into 'good wives and virtuous mothers'.

New educational laws were drawn up after the Republic was set up in 1912. The Minister of Education issued this order: 'the firmness of the foundation upon which the Republic of China has been founded depends on education. We must hereafter, make our best effort to develop and encourage women's education as well as that for men. We must emphasize and provide for social as well as school education' (Tang, 1923: p.4).

The reforms of education from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards was, to a certain extent, a response to changing environment in China. The defeat of China in wars had exposed the weaknesses of the government and reforms must be carried out to strengthen China. The Qing government, though declining in authority, attempted to set up schools for defensive and diplomatic purposes. However these half-hearted and limited reforms in education could neither halt the decline of Qing nor protect her from foreign encroachment. During the Late Qing reform (1901-11), there was a debate on the search for the best educational model for China, and as a result, the Japanese model was adopted until it was finally replaced by the American education system in the Republican era (Pepper, 1996: pp.61-61).

The initial inclusion of education for girls in the national education system in 1907 was of great significance. It was significant that formal schooling for girls was no longer monopolized by religious bodies and private sector. Although the classics dominated the approved curriculum at all levels, the need of girls in education was finally recognized by the state. From then on, education for girls was regarded as an integral part of the national education system and curriculum for girls was designed. It was not confined to the training of 'good mothers and virtuous wives'. This could be seen from the curriculum in the section that follows.

3.2.4. Educational conditions in Guangdong

The Nationalist government at Nanjing regarded its educational policies as key element in the creation of a modern state. The aims of its educational policies were to be the promotion of nationalism, the maintenance of old cultural traditions, the raising of moral and physical standards, the attainment of democracy and the realization of social justice. The Nationalist government also emphasized the equality of education between the sexes and the compulsory education. However, both of these objectives could not be achieved. In 1932 girls only accounted for 15.1 percent of the enrolment in primary schools while compulsory education was not achieved in less developed provinces like Yunnan, Shaanxi, Guizhou and Gansu (Roberts, 1998: p. 173-174).

Situations were better in such coastal cities as Shanghai, Tianjin and Guangzhou where most of the girl schools concentrated. In 1932, there were 39 public middle schools set up by provincial and municipal authorities, 148 set up by county authorities in Hepei. In Guangdong, there were 25 public middle schools established by both provincial and municipal authorities while 163 established by county authorities. There were 131 and 130 private middle schools in Shanghai and Guangdong respectively in the same year. The greater number of private schools in both places was a result of more pronounced mission work and better economic developments. In Guangdong, female students occupy 18.9 percent of a total of 10995 in public middle schools in 1932 while in private schools, female students accounted for 20.1 percent of a total of 28285 students. In the interior provinces such as Guizhou and Gansu, educational opportunity for girls was limited. For example, in Guizhou, out of a total of 2357 students in public middle school, there were only 194 girls. Similar conditions were seen in Yunnan and Shaanxi (SSCR, 1972: p.322).

There was no government school for girls in Guangzhou before 1928. Girls who wanted to study in government schools needed to join the schools for both boys and girls. Although normal schools were set up for girls to train female teachers and vocational education was also given to girls, the number of female students was still very small as compared to that of male. In 1931, the number of female students enrolled in upper middle schools in Guangdong was 791 (14.9 percent) while the figure for normal schools was 3201 (30 percent) (SSCR, 1972: p.320).

However, most of the mission schools for girls in the province had been established before 1900 and the graduates of these mission schools had been serving the country in many different fields. In 1933, there were 28 middle schools run by different missions in Guangdong. Among them 8 were girl schools and 3 were co-educational (Liang, 1993: p.259). In 1931, the expenditure on private middle education was 3,119,421 dollars, nearly half of the total expenditure of Guangdong province. Private middle schools, including those mission schools, still played a vital part in providing educational opportunity for girls. In other words, the government was still in its initial phase to expand girl education.

In 1932, the sum of money spent on middle education in Guangdong was 5,566,075 dollars, 77.4 percent of the total amount. Normal schools and vocational schools only accounted for the rest (SSCR, 1972: p.324). When compared with other provinces, the total expenditure on middle education was the highest. This reflected the economic strength of the Guangdong province. It was believed that the development of girl schools in Guangdong was very impressive.

3.2.5. Portrait of the First Girl School

Education was fast developing in the province of Guangdong in the late 1920s. Since the setting up of the Republic, there was, in principle, an equal opportunity of access to both primary and middle education for boys and girls. Although more and more girls were enrolled in primary schools, the number of girls enrolled in colleges was still very small. One of the factors was the lack of middle schools for girls in the province (Pan, 1984: pp.1-2). Middle education for girls was largely vocational in nature. There were schools to train teachers, instructors of physical education, nurses as well as clerks. Comprehensive education for girls was mainly confined to mission schools in Guangzhou like True Light and Peidao Girls' schools and such private girls' school like Zhixin Girls' school. (Pan, 1984: p.2)

At that time, there was a discussion in the educational circle on the differences between education for males and females. In terms of academic performance, girls exceeded that of the boys at elementary level. Nevertheless, during the college years, boys tended to achieve better results than girls. Educators concluded that middle education was of utmost importance to both sexes as both boys and girls were exposed to all sorts of influence during these years. The discussion also ended with a decision to provide a middle education which was suitable and relevant to the growth of female students (Pan, 1984: p.2).

In the mean time, some educators encouraged the establishment of public middle schools for girls to complete the path from public elementary education to college education (Pan, 1984: p.1). At that time, there were no public middle schools for girls. The girl schools in Guangzhou were those organized by the missionaries in China.

It was under such circumstances that Wang Zai, the Minister of education of Guangdong, proposed the setting up of the first public girl school in Guangzhou. The proposal was finally accepted and another three public schools for girls were planned to establish in different parts of Guangdong. But due to the Japanese invasion, the plan to set up other girls' schools could not be materialized.

The school was started on the site of a former Institute of Physical Education for girls. Two main goals were set for the first year. First the school management board planned to erect a new school building which was capable of further development. Second, the school attempted to develop a curriculum for girls. However, as a result of the change in the personnel in the Ministry of Education, there was frequent change of principals and staff during a period of 12 years. The second goal was not fully implemented.

In 1934, the school moved to the new site which was one of the most modern and beautiful Campuses in Guangzhou. The facilities were also among the best in the city. Apart from the classrooms, there were school hall, library, laboratories, basket court, canteen and hostels for both teachers and students. And the emphases were put on academic improvement and sports [1]. Physical education was given priority through the organization of ball teams.

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937 marked the invasion of Japan. The major cities were continually bombarded by fighters and Guangzhou was of no exception. As the citizens evacuated, the school was forced to move to the county of Shunde and teaching was resumed there. Ancestral halls were used as classrooms and hostels while temporary classrooms and hostels were erected to meet the needs. Frequent bombing made normal school activities impossible in late

1938. Teachers and students were therefore forced to leave the countryside for different destinations, and the school was formally dismissed.

After the War, while most of the middle schools resumed their educational services in Guangzhou, the Girls' school was unable to go on. The reason for this, according to one of the teachers and some students, was that the seal of the school had been lost during the war. As a result, the school lost its right to resume educational service. Some of its teachers were recruited by the Zhixin Girls' School headed by Lin Baoquan. The School only lives in the memory of the students.

Note:

- [1] According to a discussion included in an educational report of Guangdong in 1928, there were many student movements in the province. Therefore, sports and physical education were encouraged by the provincial government as one of the ways to divert students' attention from the student movements and discipline their behaviour. (See ERGD, 1928: p. 8) For the introduction and development of the subject in mission schools, see Graham, G. (1994) "Exercising Control: Sports and Physical Education in American Protestant Mission Schools in China, 1880-1930" in *Sign: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol.20, no.1 (The University of Chicago) pp.23-48

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. Definition of Key Concepts

4.1.1. Benefits of Schooling

A benefit is a good result of something that makes life better for somebody. Benefits of schooling refer to the good consequences of having received education or knowledge during the schooling process which, it is generally assumed, will bring about the improvement of life. Benefits of schooling for women in China had been presented in different forms of writing. There are the autobiographical accounts of educated women (Yang, 1967; Wong, 1953; Yim, 1989) in which education is instrumental in bringing about the widening of the horizon, the raising of consciousness, the personal achievement as well as the improvement of social status. The contributions of women in various fields have been made possible with the acquisition of education. Chinese women's participation in education like Wu yifang (Wang, 1996) and the principals of the First School for Girls; revolutionary movements (Kazuko, 1989; Gilmartin, 1995), national affairs (Zhang, 1995; Snow, 1967), Chinese women movement (Siu, 1981; Croll, 1979; Davin, 1976), student movements (Freyn, 1939), literary work, and even national reconstruction through playing different roles in the society (Cusack, 1985; Li, 1992).

The four respondents in this study had received modern education in the 1930s which was still limited to a minority of the society. It is interesting to examine if and how education they received benefited them in their working years and through their perspectives. The above works on the women will help to throw light on the explication of the benefits of schooling.

4.1.2. Schooling Process

Schooling process refers to the period of time during which activities related to schooling take place. Those activities include teaching and learning in the classrooms and in the school environment, including academic and extra-curricular activities, and special activities, e.g. graduate ceremony and open day. Interactions between students and teaching staff and among the students also constitute parts of the process. In this study, the process is confined to the time when the respondents started they joined the First School for Girls and ended after they graduated from the school.

4.1.3. Curriculum and Hidden Curriculum

‘Curriculum’ itself is not easy to define. It includes but is certainly more than syllabus; it is more than ‘all the planned learning experiences’ often referred to the texts about curriculum studies, for curriculum also includes quite unplanned learning experiences.

As an agent of socialization and role allocation, the school has an ‘official’ curriculum with a set of explicitly stated goals and objectives. These goals and objectives relate to what knowledge and skills ought to be imparted and attitudes developed (Pai & Adler, 1997: pp.147). It is also suggested that curriculum includes ‘the formal content areas which often come down to teachers as ‘the syllabus’, the way in which the content is presented and the attitudes and values conveyed by the content or the process of learning explicitly’ (Henry, Knight, Lingard & Taylor, 1992: p.60). According to structural-functionalist point of view, this formal curriculum helps to develop among the individual’s norms and values which maintain the established system. Theorists of reproduction would see it as a

means to reproduce class relations which uphold the inequality of classes. Advocates of the new sociology of education point out that we must not take curriculum for granted as it reflects the contest between dominant and subordination classes. Hence, the functions of formal curriculum vary with different points of view.

In addition to the formal curriculum, the school also has an informal set of practices with which the learners are socialized. The expression 'hidden curriculum' refers to school's indirect means of helping young people learn the norms and values of their society. It also refers to the lived curriculum, emphasizing that these informal set of practices define the day-to-day experiences of students and often assume a greater importance than the formal, subject matter curriculum. What children learn is affected by the overall school climate, the administrative-styles of the school staff, the nature of the teacher-pupil relationship and the teaching approaches of teachers (Pai & Adler, p. 148). The concept of the hidden curriculum is used to distinguish the implicit functioning and outcomes of education from explicitly stated goals, strategies and content (Henry, Knight, Lingard & Taylor, 1992: p.60). In the present study, in addition to the formal curriculum which includes subject contents and the normal teaching and learning in the classroom, the lived curriculum of the day-to-day experiences as reflected by the respondents will also be dealt with.

4.2. The Scope of Study

As this study intends to investigate the schooling process of a girl's school in the eyes of its former students and the benefits of knowledge they had received, the focus is mainly on how the respondents interpret the benefits of schooling. Although they started their education in primary schools, the schooling process

covered in this study will be confined to their life in the middle school. Nevertheless, the factors contributing to their entry into schooling will also be touched upon.

‘Education’ is defined by Coleman (1965, p.13) as ‘teaching and related activities in schools.’ In this study, the schooling process of the girls will be reconstructed. What took place in the school will be examined so as to grasp a clearer picture of the kind of education they received. Therefore, teaching and learning in the classroom is just one of the aspects of school life. Other significant activities such as extra-curricular activities, hidden curriculum through assembly and special functions will also be assessed. It is widely believed that teachers will exert profound influence on students, therefore the relations between teachers and students will be studied. This study will, in the meantime, inquire into the peer influence in relation to their school life. It is hoped that an examination of these aspects of schooling will help understand the benefits of schooling.

During their school years (1931-1937), China faced the invasion of Japan and the Nationalist government encountered the challenge of the Chinese Communist Party. Military threat and political activities had constituted part of the school life. It is meaningful to know what benefits did education confer upon them as they needed to respond to these events.

In order to assess the benefits of the knowledge they received from the school and how they applied in different situations, their working years after graduation will also be analyzed. All the respondents joined the teaching profession as their career. It is interesting to know if and how the knowledge they gained benefited them in their career and teaching work or not. As educated women, the ways they faced the challenges of social and political upheavals are also studied so

as to find out the benefits of schooling. This study also inquires into whether and how education helped them deal with problems and live a better life.

4.3. Research Methods

4.3.1. Qualitative Studies

‘The processes of education, teaching and learning are so complex and multifaceted’ that the most productive approach is a qualitative one. Since the present study aims to capture the cross-section of schooling which was an on-going process, a qualitative research method is adopted. ‘A qualitative research orientation places individual actors at its centre, it will focus upon context, meaning, culture, history and biography’ (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Since the present study aims at reconstructing the schooling process from the perspectives of girls educated in the 1920s and 1930s, it stresses the meanings that education conferred upon them and their responses towards the knowledge they received. How they gained and used the knowledge? How were they transformed by the knowledge? Therefore, it is appropriate to adopt qualitative research methods to help reveal what happened to them.

Gary and Atkinson (1995) first state that ‘qualitative research can be described as any social science research that produces results that are not obtained by statistical procedures or other methods of quantification.’ What makes it different from quantitative research methods, according to Gary and Atkinson, is that it ‘requires the researcher to empathize with the people being studied’ and put ‘emphasis on process, of how things change.’ In addition, the research should be able to ‘provide detailed description of the settings they investigate’ by asking questions such as ‘What is it like?’ and ‘What’s going on?’ A qualitative research

is 'relatively unstructured' in the sense that the researcher holds an open approach and strategy towards a case and 'often rejects the formulation of theories until after the research has started the investigation' (Gary & Atkinson, 1995: p. 207).

According to Hakim (1987), 'qualitative research is concerned with individuals' own accounts of their attitudes, motivations and behaviour.' They further elaborate the definition by saying that qualitative research 'offers richly descriptive reports of individuals' perception, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meanings and interpretations given to events and things, as well as their behaviour; displays how these are put together, more or less coherently and consciously, into frameworks which make sense of their experiences; and illuminates the motivations which connect attitudes and behaviour, the discontinuities, or even contradictions, between attitudes and behaviour, or how conflicting attitudes and motivations are resolved in particular choices made.' As the present study intends to look into the attitudes, motivations and behaviour of the educated women, it is valuable to research in the principles of qualitative research methods (Hakim, 1987: p. 26).

Bodgan and Biklen (1992) also provide a summary of the characteristics of qualitative research. They are as follows:

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the research is the key instrument. The researchers go to the particular setting whenever possible to observe, interview, record, videotape and collect relevant data directly.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive. The researchers try to analyze the data with all of their richness and describe what a particular situation or view is like in narrative form. There is the assumption that 'nothing is trivial, that everything

has the potential of being a clue' to unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.

3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather simply with outcomes or products. The researchers focus upon the interactions among people and the interactions between people and the setting so as to reveal meanings.
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively. They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypothesis they hold before entering the study; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars have been gathered are grouped together.
5. "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. The researchers are interested in ways different people make sense out of their lives, or the participant perspectives (Bodgan and Biklen, 1992, p. 29-32).

4.3.2. In-depth Interview

The interview is one of the main tools in collecting qualitative data. It is usually used to access people's perception, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. 'The interview is a kind of conversation with a purpose' (Robson, 1993: p.228). 'It is one initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation' (Cohen & Manion, 1989: p.307) According to Patton (1990), 'the purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective' to observe feelings, thoughts, intentions and behaviours that took place at some previous point of time (Patton, 1990: p.278). To reconstruct the schooling process which is meaningful to the respondents, it is necessary to let them tell in their own terms and understand their constructions of reality. The interview is a powerful way to achieve this end (Punch, 1998: p.175).

There are many different types of interviews. Patton (1990) distinguishes three main types of interview: the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach and the standardized open-end interview. Hitchcock & Hughes (1995) divides it into standardized interview and non-standardized. The former includes the structured and semi-structured interviews while the latter includes the group interview and the unstructured interview. It is similar to the three-way classification of structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviewing suggested by Fontana and Frey (1994). Similarly, Fielding (1996) uses 'standardized', 'semi-standardized' and 'non-standardized' to describe his typology. They all distinguish the interviewing methods on the basis of the degree of structure involved.

'The aim of qualitative research is often to describe in detail what is happening in a group, in a conversation, or in a community: who spoke to whom, with what message, with what feelings, with what effect' (Gary, 1996: p.171). In order to find out what happened to the women when they were studying in the school, to explore the personal and social worlds of the respondents and to reconstruct their processes of schooling, the in-depth interview will be adopted. In the first place, a group interview with four students was conducted to explore their world and get the main themes from them. Then I joined one of their regular gatherings and talked with some other students to seek for potential respondents. These preliminary works also help me to formulate questions that will be raised in the subsequent interviews.

4.3.3. Documentary and Textual Analysis

Documents, both historical and contemporary, are a rich source of data for social researchers. Documentary data may be collected in conjunction with other methods of collecting data such as interviews and observation. They can be important in triangulation and provide a 'rich vein for analysis' (Punch, 1998: p.190).

The range of documents, which might be used by social researchers, includes diaries, letters, essays, personal notes, biographies and autobiographies, institutional memoranda and report, and government pronouncements and proceedings (Jupp, 1996). Files, statistics and records are also of great importance to social research. Documentary evidence does not only mean words, it can also include audio and visual evidence (Punch, p.190).

The analysis of documentary and textual data has some distinctive themes:

- (1) The social production of the document. Since all documents and texts are produced within the constraints of particular social, historical or administrative conditions and structure, it is essential to interpret documents and texts in their social context so as to find out their real meaning.
- (2) The social organization of the document. The following questions should be asked to understand how documents and texts are organized: How are documents written? How are they read? Who writes them? Who reads them? For what purposes? On what occasion? With what outcomes? What is recorder? What is omitted? Etc.
- (3) The analysis can focus on the literal meaning or the deeper meaning and the multi-layered nature of meaning.

- (4) The application of different theoretical perspectives to the analysis of texts and documents. Different perspectives can be applied to textual analysis to reveal the richness of data (Punch, p.232).

This study not only bases the reconstruction of schooling process upon the recollection of the respondents, but also the documents the teachers and students produce. After half a century of silence and inactiveness, the students formed an Old Students' Association (OSA) for themselves in the 1980s. And since then regular meetings or gatherings have been organized by some activists among them. They also decided to issue an Old Students' Magazine (OSM) annually to preserve memories and experiences of the 'good old days'. After an intensive reading of all the available Old Students' Magazines, the following categories are classified:

- (1) The description of school life including classroom teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, morning assembly etc.
- (2) Teacher-student relationships and peer relationships.
- (3) The description of school premises and environment.
- (4) The biographies of teachers and principals.
- (5) The definitions and interpretations of school motto, school song and the spirit of the school.
- (6) The description of the students' participation into anti-Japanese activities.
- (7) The record of some of the students' participation into communist activities.
- (8) The literary writings of teachers and students. For instance, school history, poems, travels etc.

The OSM contained materials showing the fruits of education. To mention but a few, there were outstanding graduates who had great achievements in different fields, e.g. doctors, artists, professors. There were accounts of political

and social participation and the literary works of graduates. Without education, all these might not have been possible.

An analysis of the Old Students' Magazines will be conducted in accordance with the above principles in order to grasp a comparatively clear picture of the course of education about the respondents. They will also be used to compare with the recollection of the respondents so as to produce more accurate description and analysis of the schooling process. The rich description of the physical environment also helps to reconstruct the setting in which school activities had taken place. It will be of great worth especially when the school has been used by the Navy and is classified as forbidden area in Guangzhou.

4.4. Sample Selection

My interest in the education of women and the schooling process of girls' schools was a result of a long talk in early spring of 1996 with my aunt who was a student in a girls' school. It is also interesting to know if and how education women students received had benefited them, especially in a changing traditional society, both economically and politically. Like the city of Guangzhou.

After the conversation, I would like to confirm the areas I was going to explore so I started collecting materials about the girls' school and reading literature on the topic. At the same time, I got access to some of the students and organized two group interviews to search for meaningful themes. I also joined three of their 'Tuesday gatherings' (Every two weeks, graduates of the girls' school gather to share with one another in a restaurant) which usually lasted for two hours. Most of these activities took place in 1996.

Later, I tried to confine the potential informants to eight of them and with the help of my aunt I approach them one by one. Some of them responded with great interest and enthusiasm but some turned me down for different reasons. In the end, I decided to limit the interviews to four graduates of the school.

Among the four respondents, two spent six years in the middle school for girls while the other two spent their junior middle education there and continued their education in normal schools for girls. They entered the school in the same year (1931) but not all of them belonged to the same class because there were three classes in secondary one. Their profiles are presented in chapter five. I attempted to approach another two students who had completed six years of education in the girls' school. They had promised to be interviewed but unfortunately one of them was hit by stroke and another one had migrated to Australia. It is hoped that a clearer picture can be developed with the help of documents and texts.

4.5. Data Collection and Organization

Before the interviews, an interview guide (see appendix) was prepared in which family background, relations among family members, the ways they started schooling, the school life of the women were emphasized. In the first round of interviews, each interview took not less than three hours to finish. In the second round of interviews, questions about the benefits of knowledge and how they perceived the uses of education were stressed. It also took me more than three hours to conduct each interview. All the interviews were recorded with cassette recorder after I gained the consent of the informants. I transcribed the contents of the recorded interviews as soon as possible so that the details immediately before and after the interviews would not be lost. During the process of transcription, there

were some points, which I missed, or I needed to clarify, I would give them distance calls to ask for relevant information.

In order to enrich the description of schooling process, I conducted two interviews with a teacher of the school, one in 1996, another one in 1998. Each of them lasted for three hours and was conducted in the teacher's home. I also tried to contact another teacher in the United States who served in the girls' school as teacher of Physical Education from its establishment in 1928 to its dismissal in 1940. With the help of a student, I received a letter from this teacher. In the letter, he had described the changes of personnel and some aspects of extra-curricular activities.

I also intended to collect all the Old Students' Magazines the students have produced since early 1980s. But due to fact that the amount of the earlier issues was very small, it was impossible to collect them all. According to my respondents, the contents of the earlier issues were not as rich as those produced in the 1990s so the latest issues could provide more relevant information for the study.

4.6. Limitations of the Study

- (1) There can be inconsistency of the information obtained from the respondents as it can be affected by their age, health. Experiences and subjectivity. The researcher needs to check it with documents and texts to maximize the accuracy.
- (2) It takes a long time to collect and analyze data in qualitative researches, especially through such methods as interviews. Given the time limitation, there may not be enough time to elicit adequate information for analysis.

- (3) This study aims at exploring the world of individuals rather than constructing generalized patterns. The emphasis is on the understanding of the depth of the unique experiences rather than the breadth of the problems; the analysis tends to be descriptive rather than explanative. However, it is hoped that through the in-depth interviews of the respondents, the study attempts to yield hypothesis about relations between observations and uncover new factors of significance.
- (4) Since the Girl school under investigation lasted for about 12 years. After its suspension, China experienced foreign invasion, internal strife as well as political campaigns. First hand the respondents themselves could not properly preserve materials.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PROFILES OF THE RESPONDENTS

Although the four respondents studied in the same school, they did not enter the school at the same time. All of them joined the girl school after completing primary education in 1931. But two of them left the school after they had finished junior middle education in 1933. In this chapter, the profiles of the respondents are introduced but the names of the respondents are fictitious for the sake of anonymity.

5.1. Ru – Daughter of a Doctor of Chinese Medicine

Ru was the fifth child of a doctor of Chinese medicine in Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong province in southern China. Ru's father had ten children but unfortunately only five grew into adulthood. Since her father was a famous doctor, family income was quite steady. Ru's childhood was a period of comfort as her parents purchased *Mui Tsai* [1] to take care of them and do all the household work. Ru lived a happy life as she always played and studied with her brothers and sisters. She did not feel any discrimination from her father although she was a girl.

Ru's mother received no formal education but she was able to read newspapers. She remembered that her mother occasionally shared with them her opinions on the current affairs. In the eyes of Ru, her father was a liberal man with a solid knowledge of Classical Chinese learning. Although he was busy with his work during daytime, he would spare some time talking with his children after returning home. Ru remembered clearly what her father said, 'it is important to learn how to read and write, so all of you (his children) must go to school to study.' When Ru reached the age of six, she joined a primary school nearby.

She entered the first public school for girls after she had finished primary education. She chose the school because of its close relationship with Zhongshan

University. Initially Ru was interested in mathematics and science. She wished to enter the Zhongshan University to study physics and be a scientist. It was not until she met a Chinese language teacher in senior forms did she change her mind. Ru fell in love with Chinese language and literature and was fond of writing. She often mentioned that it was a blessing for her to know the teacher who was such a learned man.

Ru showed much appreciation to her teachers as most of them were either graduates of overseas colleges or experienced educators in the province. School life was splendid to Ru. Besides literature, she was thirsty for all sorts of knowledge. Ru also developed close relations with teachers and classmates and learned different skills from different teachers. For instance, she learned how to draw maps accurately and quickly on the blackboard. Ru realized the importance and value of English so she worked very hard to master the language. She believed that English was not the key to western ideas and knowledge but a way to understand western countries so that China could defend her own interests.

After graduation from the girl school in 1937, Ru did not get a place in Zhongshan University. Later, she was enrolled in the University of Guangzhou and spent two years studying there. It was a disappointment to Ru because she was forced to terminate her study when the University sought refuge in the countryside. In 1938, Guangzhou fell into the hands of the Japanese, Ru's father could no longer carry on his work as his clinic was confiscated by the Japanese troops. In order to escape from Japanese rule, the whole family moved to Shaoguan in late 1939. Ru decided to be a field reporter because she wanted to expose the evil deeds of the Japanese troops and report on the sufferings of her fellow countrymen, especially about women and children. But her witness of the suffering of a poor boy changed

her decision. At last she became a teacher in a Home for Children Refugees [2] in northern Guangdong for three years.

During this period, Ru was satisfied with her own performance and the principal also regarded her as one of the most brilliant assistants. She was later promoted to be the head teacher in the school and was responsible for holding weekly assembly in which she instilled the students with patriotism. However, in 1943, Ru left the home for the children refugees and worked in a primary school in Lianxian as Master of discipline. No sooner had she started her teaching work did her mother die. The sudden death of Ru's mother brought her much grief but she managed to recover from it within a short period of time. Ru thought that she must be strong enough to set a model for her students for most of their parents and relatives died in the war.

The war with Japan came to an end in 1945, but China was immediately involved in the civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists. Ru returned to Guangzhou with her family but unfortunately her father died shortly after they returned home. The family was in great financial difficulty so Ru needed to earn a living for the family. Ru continued her teaching profession by joining a primary school in Guangzhou. She taught in the same school after the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. The highest post Ru held in the school was the master of academic affairs which equaled the position of vice principal. Ru understood that she had no chance to be the principal because she was not a member of the ruling Communist Party. However, Ru showed no regret to stay out of the Party for teaching had brought her more satisfaction and recognition. Ru retired in 1979 after being a teacher for more than thirty years.

After retirement, Ru refused to spend all the time helping to care of grandchildren. She insisted on reading, writing and now watching television because these activities have kept her young at heart and refreshed her mind. Although she studies Buddhism, she points out the difference between the belief as an attitude and a way of life and the superstitious behaviour of the people. Ru also comments on the current affairs which she got from watching television. She is enjoying her 'golden days of life'.

5.2. Fang – Daughter of a postman

Fang was born into a poor family in 1917 with a conservative atmosphere. Her mother did not receive any education and was always under the influence of her father's elder sister. However, Fang had a very good impression about his father who was diligent, liberal as well as progressive. When he was young he went to learn English with his best friend but later he was forced to stop because he could not afford to pay the fee. His father then learned the language from his best friend who came from a rich family. His father's best friend later went abroad to further study and they continued to communicate with each other through letters. His friend even encouraged Fang's father to apply for a post in the Post Office which required a command of English. Fang expressed that she was greatly influenced by her father's strong character for he did his best to improve himself and the living of the whole family.

The health of Fang was not very good as she always needed to consult doctors and take medicine. Fang received special care from her mother and her father treated her especially well. When she was seven, her father sent her to a primary school to study. But on the first day, Fang was hit by one of the teachers and returned home with a crying face. His father withdrew her from that school and

sent her to a *sishu* [3] where she studied with the boys. About a year later, she was successfully enrolled in another public primary school where the principal was kind and the teachers were young and gentle. Fang enjoyed studying in that school very much.

Upon graduating from the primary school, Fang had to prepare for the coming public examinations so that she could gain a place in the middle school. At that time, the principal invited a part-time mathematics teacher from the Zhongzhan University to help them. The part-time teacher was a student from the University who wanted to gain some experience of teaching. There was no need for Fang and her classmates to pay any extra fee. Fang appreciated this young teacher because his methods were interesting and stimulating. In the end, five pupils succeeded in entering the first girl middle school in Guangzhou and Fang was one of them.

There was a debate in the family on whether Fang should go on with her education in the middle school. Her aunt strongly opposed to this idea and indicated that primary education was more than enough to make Fang a good wife and mother. But at the insistence of her father, Fang was given a chance to sit for public examination to apply for a middle school. She could only choose one middle school to join and if she failed her formal education would come to an end. After Fang learned this, she spent all her time preparing for the public examination. The reason for Fang to choose the middle school for girls was that it was regarded as the best girl school at that time.

Fang enjoyed her school life during her stay in the school. The most memorable incident was the participation in the Anti-Japanese Campaign. The classmates were divided into teams of five or six and went to different places to ask for donations. Fang was also helping with the decoration of exhibition boards such

as the drawing of pictures and diagrams. Sometimes, they had to work until nine o'clock at night and the teachers always accompanied them to go home. Fang felt that the teachers treated them as their own children and she would never forget the time they were together.

During this period, Fang also developed a reading habit. It was a result of the good learning atmosphere of the school and the influence of her teachers, especially her class teacher. Although the school library was not too large, it contained many English books and Chinese novels written by the contemporary writers such as Lu Xun and Mao Dun. Fang also discovered that there was a bookstore near the school and the price was very low. After school, Fang usually spent some time in this bookstore before she went home. Fang was particularly interested in books about women and heroines. For example, Fang found great interest in the history about Wu Jetian, the first women emperor in China. She appreciated Wu's intelligence and competence because she was able to rule over such a vast empire with so many officials. She could also maintain the power and prestige of the Tang dynasty. It was not an easy task for a woman in China. On the one hand, Fang learned more about the inequality tradition had imposed upon women; on the other hand, she admired those outstanding women in Chinese history and deeply affected by them.

Owing to the limited income of her father, Fang was forced to leave the girls' school after completing the junior middle education and joined a normal school in Guangzhou. This was also an idea of her aunt as there was no need to pay school fee and the financial burden was alleviated. The normal school also provided students with free dormitory and meals. At first, Fang was not willing to accept it but after the counseling of her class teacher in the girls' school, she bid farewell to the teachers, classmates and the school.

Another reason why Fang accepted the reality was that she had made up her mind to be a teacher for the rest of her life. Fang clearly pointed out that it was the words and deeds of the teachers in the girls' school that exerted great influence on her. Like the days in the girls' school, Fang tried to learn as much as possible and prepare herself to be a dutiful teacher in the future.

After graduation from the normal school, one of her teachers introduced Fang to be a teacher in a primary school in Hong Kong. But less than one year she had to return to Guangzhou because the school was close as a result of lack of fund. In 1938, after the fall of Guangzhou into Japanese hands, Fang fled to Macao where, with the encouragement of her cousin, she joined the supplementary force to assist the Nationalist army against the Japanese. It was not easy to find a job during wartime and working in the army was one of the ways to earn a living and contribute to the country. Fang was responsible for clerical work as well as nursing. Sometimes, she needed to teach the soldiers how to read and write because most of them came from the countryside and had received little education. This was the first time Fang realized the importance of education and the value of being a teacher.

Fang returned to Guangzhou one year before the victory over Japan because of his father's death. A former teacher introduced Fang to work in a primary school until the setting up of the People's Republic in 1949. Fang was excited and glad to see a unified country so she devoted all her time to teaching and administrative work. Fang was appointed the principal of her primary school and became more active in political activities. Although Fang was not a member of the Communist Party, she was later invited to be a people's representative in the provincial council as a result of her enthusiasm in working for the new regime. She succeeded in

facing the challenges of political campaigns in the 1950s but was criticized and persecuted during the Great Cultural Revolution which started in 1966. Fang lost two of his four sons during this period and after reflection Fang decided to retire in early 1970s to take care of her sons. Her sons fled to Hong Kong in late 1970s. Fang moved to Hong Kong as one of her two sons died in a traffic accident. Fang expressed that she need to compensate for her only son by giving him all her support.

Fang is now in her eighties and still healthy enough to travel between Hong Kong and Guangzhou every month to take care of her son and husband in both places. Fang is happy to live in Hong Kong because she can contact with the most updated information through newspapers, books, magazines and television. Since Fang always travels between Hong Kong and Guangzhou, she acts as a bridge and channel between the students in two places. She helps her old schoolmates in Guangzhou to buy the things they need which include medicine, clothes and books. Fang points out, 'I am contented with the present conditions. I enjoy good health and the things I can do every day. Now I am over eighty but I can still read the small characters on newspapers and go from one place to another, I still have good hearing. Life like this is good enough. What else can I ask for?'

5.3. Rong – Daughter of a Chinese Restaurant Owner

As Rong was still a child, the financial condition of the family was on its decline. Rong's father was a restaurant owner and was famous for the mooncakes he produced. At home, he was also a traditional father who asked his children to study in *sishu* instead of the modern school. Originally, the financial condition was quite good, but later business of Rong's father was getting worse because of

shortage of capital to face keen competition. As the youngest child in the family, Rong had no idea about this and did not worry about the family conditions. It was not until she entered the middle school that did her eldest sister tell her everything.

In fact, Rong had sensed something wrong as both her elder brother and father died within a short time. There was a serious plague in Guangzhou which had taken the life of Rong's brother. The loss of the only son aggravated the health of her father who died shortly thereafter. Her father's death caused great economic crisis, the business was sold to other people. The burden was now on the shoulder of her elder sister who became a factory worker. It was also her sister who encouraged Rong to go on with the education and provided her with school fee.

Rong's mother was a traditional woman who did the housework at home. The loss of her son made her focus all her love and care on Rong. Rong also developed intimate relations with her elder sister. Before Rong made any decision, she would ask her sister for opinion and usually Rong would respect her sister's decisions. Rong remembered that her sister made her the scout uniform without going to bed for the whole night. Rong was so moved that she was crying when she saw the uniform the next morning.

In 1931, Rong was successfully enrolled in the girls' school. It was not an easy task as the competition was very keen. The first important event of the school was the Anti-Japanese Campaign as a result of the Manchurian Crisis. The principal and the discipline master shared with the schoolmates the latest news and everybody was crying in the school hall. Next, Rong was very happy to learn that the music teacher would teach them western folk songs because she loved singing very much. Rong pointed out that it is one of the best ways to learn English

pronunciation. Rong was interested in many subjects but she admitted that she was poor in art.

In 1932, the school moved to a new campus consisting of new teaching building, school hall, gymnasium, hostels for teachers and students, library and laboratories. Rong was proud of being a member of the school because it was an ideal place for studying. In senior forms, Rong worked hard to get better results in every subject. She did this for two purposes: First, she wanted to enter the prestigious Zhongzhan University. Second, if she were able to get an average of eighty marks or above, she would be exempted from paying school fee.

The coming of the Japanese troops shattered Rong's dream of becoming a college student. She did not sit for the entrance examination because her sister advised her to go to Macao for the sake of safety. Later Rong went to Hong Kong and lived with her sister who had married a factory worker in the colony. It was extremely difficult to earn a living as more and more people fluxed into Hong Kong. The only job Rong could get was a part-time worker in an oyster field in Tun Mun. After discussing with her sister, Rong decided to return to Guangdong to take care of her mother in 1941.

Guangzhou was occupied and controlled by the Japanese military government. Life of the common people was very difficult. There was widespread unemployment and shortage of food. Rong remembered that many people died of hunger and corpses were found at every corner of the streets. It was fortunate for Rong to find a post in the government and worked as a clerk. At first, she did not want to be a 'vase' to work in the Japanese-controlled government. However, she needed to earn a living for herself and her mother and finally accepted it.

Guangzhou was recovered in 1945 by the Nationalist army. Rong got married the next year with a man she knew for many years. Her husband was a college graduate and was working in the bank. Life after marriage was happy. She also succeeded in applying for a teaching post in a primary school.

In 1953, Rong's husband was sent to work in a state bank in Shantou by the new government and the whole family moved to Chaozhou. For the next five years, Rong's younger son and daughter were born and she needed to take care four children. It was also during this period that Rong clashed in opinion with her husband on whether they should stay in Shantou or not. Rong's husband wanted to continue his job in the bank while Rong could not bear that all her children spoke Chaozhou dialect and forgot the Cantonese. Thus she took all the children back to Guangzhou on her own and asked her husband to apply for another post in the city. Rong described that it was a hard and unforgettable journey. She was proud of herself for she needed to take care of four children on the way, the youngest was only two years old.

After returning to Guangzhou, she went to negotiate with the Party and got the job of superintendent of a nursery. It was a job convenient to her because she could put all her children in the nursery on the one hand and perform her administrative duty on the other. Rong worked in the nursery until she retired in early 1980s.

5.4. Qing – Daughter of a Judge

Qing was born in a wealthy family and she was the youngest daughter in it. Her parents treated her very well for they believed that Qing had brought two brothers to them. Qing's father was a judge and enjoyed high social status in the

society. Her mother was kind but determined and came from a big family in Guangzhou. There were some *Mui Tsai* to serve the family. Some were responsible for taking care of the children while others were in charge of all the household work. Her mother regarded all the *Mui Tsai* as member of the family so she taught the children to respect them.

Since Qing's father was an educated man and enjoyed high prestige in the circle of judiciary, he would like his children to receive as much education as possible. The wealth of the family could also support all the children to study. Therefore, the opportunity to education was available to each child, no matter boys or girls. The way Qing started her primary schooling was quite interesting. She had to defer one year so that she could go to school with her brother as companion. This resulted in an intimate relationship between Qing and her brother. They played and did homework together. They even slept together. That was why Qing developed a character like a boy.

After Qing had finished the primary education, she was successful in getting into the girls' school. In fact, one of Qing's sisters had been a student in the same school so Qing had no choice. Qing's sister was her idol in the school because she was the model student in the eyes of the teachers. She was good at making speeches and won the champion of speech-making competition in the province. She was an outstanding member of school debate team and basketball team. In addition, the academic performance of her sister was among the best in the school so nearly all schoolmates know her name. But nobody knew, including Qing, that she had joined the communist-led student movement secretly. It was not until Qing read her sister's diary did she learn it. The diary was discovered by her mother after Qing's sister was arrested by the police force.

The school was also famous for its sports. School teams always got brilliant results in inter-school sports competitions. Qing was an active and outgoing girl who joined the school basketball team. Besides training time, Qing often played basketball in the court with her classmates. In fact, she was interested in all sorts of sports and through these activities Qing knew many friends from other classes. In the classroom, Qing described herself as a talkative student but she would respect the teachers, especially those she liked. She loved mathematics because the teacher's teaching methods were very stimulating.

The junior students needed to sit for a promotion examination that qualified them to become senior students in the school. It was a disappointment to Qing because she was sick during the time of examination. Her sister also petitioned for her but failed to persuade the board of school. The only thing Qing could do was to further her study in a normal school for girls. Qing admitted that her dream of being a college student was shattered and was unable to follow the path of her sister.

The days in the normal school brought about new experiences. Qing was specialized in science and mathematics but her interest in educational psychology grew with the passing of time. She also needed to study educational theories which deepened her understanding of education. Though not all teaching methods were practicable, she still found some useful. All these made her more confident to be a good teacher.

Qing graduated from the normal school in 1937. She planned to teach in a primary school to put the knowledge she got into practice. However, her eldest sister persuaded Qing to go to Hong Kong to run away from the Japanese troops. During her stay in Hong Kong, Qing had nothing to do and she could not stand it.

Qing disregarded the opposition of her eldest sister and returned to Guangzhou. As the Japanese troops drew near the city, Qing moved to Shaoquan with some of her classmates. Like Ru, Qing joined the teaching team of the home for the refuge children and started the most significant time of her teaching life. Qing spent all the time with the children until the surrender of Japan in 1945.

From 1945 to 1949, Qing worked in a primary school in Guangzhou. In 1949, Qing received notice from the Party and taught in another primary and stayed there until retirement. Qing pointed out that she was just an ordinary teacher in the school, she was not required to do administrative work. Later, Qing thought she was lucky because all the senior staff of the school had to face severe criticisms and punishment from the Red Guards formed by the students. Qing said it was the darkest days not only to all the teachers and students but also to the country at large for a generation of youths had wasted their golden time and the country had lost a generation of talents.

5.5. Summary

The above are the profiles of the respondents who shared a common point by studying in the same school for girls in Guangzhou. Some of them had similar backgrounds. For example, both Ru and Qing came from well off families while Qing and Fang changed general education into a normal education. Ru, Qing and to a certain extent Rong were born into well off families in the cities. Their fathers belonged to the category of petty bourgeoisie and were able to support a family with many children. Both Ru and Qing came from relatively big families which required a steady source of income to uphold. In all the families, there was a clear division of roles with fathers responsible for economic support and mothers taking charge of household activities. This traditional picture was going to be changed

with their daughters receiving formal education within a national education system and the parents, whether they did it on purpose or not, had participated in this transformation.

It is dangerous to attribute the respondents' attainment of educational opportunity to a single factor, but the benign attitude of the family heads must be crucial. The respondents received encouragement and support from their parents that could not be easily found in the rural areas. Furthermore, the family education and parental values were equally influential in building up the attitudes and perspectives of children. This can be reflected in the respondents' acceptance of parental attitude towards the importance of education.

The atmosphere with the families was a reflection of the time. The citizens in Guangzhou were subject to the influence of foreign cultures and the Chinese culture to different degree. In making the decision of what kind of education would be most suitable for their younger generation, there might be different points of view elicited from different value systems. Maybe this was the case experienced by the respondents mentioned above.

As can be detected from the above profiled, living in a coastal city like Guangzhou provided more chances and a variety of experiences for the citizens. There was better educational opportunity. A more complete national schooling system with better investment in education was present. Social mobility was made possible by the improvement of transportation system. It was also convenient to have contact with the outside world. All these may contribute, if we take it positively, to the arousal of curiosity and formation of an open-mind which were indispensable to self-motivated learning.

They had more differences that can be discerned from their lives. Fang more or less had to struggle with financial strain. The reason why her father insisted on giving her education will be discussed later. Among the family heads, two of them can be categorized as traditional occupations of the Chinese people: a doctor of Chinese medicine and owner of a Chinese restaurant. Qing's father should be the one receiving more western education as he was a judge. Fang's father belonged to the working classes but he always tried to improve his condition with self-study after working hours. In doing so, he might set an example for his daughter and show how important education was.

What role does education play in shaping their lives as delineated above and what benefits do the process of schooling and the knowledge they received confer on them? How did they interpret the meaning and impact of education? Possible answers will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

Notes:

- [1] *Mui Tsai* was 'a name given to the girl after she had been through the customary transaction that was widespread and known all over China.' (Jaschok, 1988: p. 7) There are different points of view on this social practice. Some regard it as child slavery while others see it as a charitable system. For details, see (Jaschok & Miers, 1994: p.11), there are the life stories and variations of *Mui Tsai* in the above-mentioned books. And also, in the second book, there is a story told by a *Mui Tsai*, Janet Lim. (Jaschok & Miers, ch. 5)
- [2] Homes for the Children Refugees (HCR) were special agencies organized and financed by the Relief Committee of the Nationalist government to rescue, rear as well as educate children left and lost by their parents, orphans, and children of soldiers. In the early war years, they were concentrated in Chongqing, Guilin

and northern Guangdong, Later, similar ones were set up in other provinces such as Jiangxi, Henan, Anhui and Shaanxi. Although the number of children under protection was small (see table below), when compared with the total population, they contributed much to saving and educating miserable and homeless children during wartime. For details, see (Sun, 1994: pp. 208-226). A comprehensive account of the HCR in northern Guangdong is given by its former president, Wu Jufang, in her book. See Wu, J.F. (1984) *A History of the Home for Children in Guangdong* (Hong Kong).

Year	Total Number of Children Refugees Admitted
1939	2071
1941	3843
1942	11030
1943	11517
1944	12871
1944 (Dec)	10853

Source: (Sun, 1994: pp. 213-215)

[3] *Sishu* or privates schools still played an important in offering primary education to a large portion of children after 1911. In these traditional-style private schools, old manuals were recited by heart and the Chinese Classics were taught (Bastid, 1987: p.12).

CHAPTER SIX: ACQUISITION OF THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Apart from the expansion of educational opportunity since the opening of China and the favourable conditions for women education in most treaty ports, personal situation was equally decisive. Although there are variations in the way the respondents gained the opportunity to study in schools, one common point can be discerned from their interviews. All interviewees were able to receive education because of the presence of a key figure in the family. Similar accounts can also be found in works on Chinese women. (Croll, 1995: pp.54-55). A typical figure can be found in Yang's autobiography in which she described the continuous support from her grandfather who was a scholar in nineteenth century China (Yang, 1970).

The key figures can be grandparents, parents, siblings, relatives and friends. They all shared the following characteristics: First, they were usually more liberal and open-minded than the contemporaries as they welcomed new things and ideas. Next, they were courageous enough to make a decision against customs and traditional values. They also had insights in the changing society so that they could get chances for their children. The level of education of these parents was comparatively higher as they had either received traditional and modern education. As a result of their job nature and working environment, they had more contact with the outside world. This enabled them to gain new knowledge and experiences. Financially, they were able to support the cost of education for their children. But the most important of all is that they were the persons (predominantly males) with authority in the family who could convince others to accept the decisions made. Although patriarchy had been attacked during the May Fourth New Cultural Movement as one of the barriers of women's emancipation, its influence was still significant in the Chinese society.

In the case of Ru, the most influential figure in the family was her father. As a doctor of Chinese medicine, Ru's father had received traditional education in a *sishu* and learned to be a doctor from his father and grandfather. Being a doctor was the tradition of the family so Ru's eldest brother was also trained in the family to be a doctor. Her father was very popular among the patients not only for his medical knowledge and skills but also for his care for the patients. He always helped the poor patients by giving them free service and medicine. In doing so, he made a lot of friends with people from different social strata.

According to Ru, her father was open-minded and kind-hearted. He gave freedom to his children so that they could choose to learn the things they liked. He sent one of Ru's elder sisters to learn Chinese painting and music. By encouraging her sister, Ru's father bought her a new piano and invited a famous artist to teach her Chinese painting. Ru's father also provided equal opportunity of education to all his children, both boys and girls. To Ru's father, education was a means to better life and enlightenment of mind so even a girl should have gone to school. Ru did not see any different treatment between her brothers and sisters. As long as they liked to study in schools, he would support them. Ru's father was educated in the traditional way but he encouraged his children to study in modern schools. He saw that it was a changing world and modern education would enable his children to cope successfully with the changing environment.

Ru's father had developed an intimate relationship with his children. For instance, he would talk with his children after dinner. He told them stories of the past and shared with them his view on historical figures. Ru's interest in Chinese history was a cultivation of her father. He was a good listener as he often asked his children to tell him their experiences in schools. Ru once remembered that her

younger sister showed him her literary work published by a newspaper, he was very happy and prized her with a gift.

In Ru's eyes, her father was kind to everybody, including females and servants. He would purchase some *Mui Tsai* to help his wife take care of ten (one of them died young) children. He treated the *Mui Tsai* as family members by giving them same kind of food and clothes as his children. He even allowed the *Mui Tsai* to learn how to read and write so the *Mui Tsai* were loyal to the family. In a word, Ru learned that both sexes should be equal when she was a small girl and received positive encouragement to study from her father at the initial stage of her education.

The case of Rong was different. Although Rong's father was a traditional man who believed that traditional education was suitable to his children, Rong insisted on entering modern school to study. Rong's elder sister and brother were sent to study in *sishu* where the main curriculum was Four Books and Five Classics but Rong refused to follow suit. At that time, private academies still existed and were popular among the conservative parents. For example, most of Rong's cousins were sent to these private academies by their parents. Usually, the teachers hired a place or a house to be the classroom where there was no fixed number of students. There were 20 to 30 students of different age in the *sishu* where her cousins studied. Besides, reciting, reading and writing, there were no extra-curricular activities. Rong thought that it was not a proper place for her as she was very active.

From her neighbours, Rong learned what was taking place in modern schools. Besides studying different subjects, the teaching methods were more interesting than the traditional ones. Rong learned that there were many different games to play and extra-curricular activities to participate. The teachers were also

close to students and cared for them. Rong also liked the school uniform because it brought her a sense of belonging to the modern school. The environment was also much better as there was an independent campus which was attractive to Rong. Therefore, Rong always dreamed of studying in a modern school.

Another reason why Rong chose to enter a modern school rather than a *sishu* was that it was very difficult to continue the education to the middle level. Rong saw that her sister and cousins often stopped their education after several years of study. Rong wanted to further her study in the middle school.

Rong also learned a lesson from her sister. After studying a few years in *sishu*, Rong's sister became a sewing worker. She brought a sewing machine and collected clothes for finishing. She needed to work for long hour to earn some money. Sometimes, her sister worked through the whole day until two and three o'clock in the morning. Therefore, Rong decided not to be a worker. Rong wanted to be a teacher when she grew up. As Rong looked back at her life, she thanked her parents for allowing her to receive a modern education which has enriched her life.

Qing came from a well-off family similar to that of Ru. Her father was a judge in the court who enjoyed high prestige in late Qing period. Later, he resigned his job as a judge and became a lawyer because he was dissatisfied with the widespread corruption in the government. Qing's mother had just received education in *sishu* when she married her father. Since her father was rather busy he left the education of the children to his wife. The way Qing started her primary schooling was interesting for her mother assigned the responsibility of taking care of her younger brother to her. Qing deferred a year so that she could go to school with her brother as companion. Qing's brother was a clever boy and there was a positive competition between them. They were so close to each other that they

studied, played and slept together. Qing was proud of having a clever brother and giving him protection in the school. Her brother also respected Qing very much.

In Qing's family, all the girls were encouraged to study in the schools, including the daughters of her father's concubine. It seemed that it was a consensus to give education to their children as Qing heard her parents saying at different time, 'the best thing we may leave to our children is not money and property but education. With education, they can earn a living and have a better life'. Qing father also said, 'it is very important to learn in schools because learning can make you independent of the family.' Qing was deeply influenced by her father's words so for the whole of her life, she did not like to rely on other people. Qing also treasured the opportunity to study as this was, in her father's words, the best way to gain independence.

The friendship between Qing and the *Mui Tsai* who served her and her brother was one of the most unforgettable things in her childhood. The *Mui Tsai*, who accompanied them day and night, always requested Qing to teach her reading and writing in her leisure time. Qing was glad to be a 'little teacher' and she even gave homework to the *Mui Tsai*. Later, to Qing's great surprise, the *Mui Tsai* even begged her mother to let her study in the evening.

For Fang, the road to education was difficult. In the first place, Fang came from a poor family and her father was just a postman who managed to earn a living for the family. Qing suffered from great uncertainty in receiving education as she was the first-born child. There were times her mother told her that it might be the last year in the school. But fortunately, the school fee for primary education was low and the financial burden was not too heavy for her parents. Apart from these,

Fang's aunt was an obstacle to her as she always tried to persuade Fang's father not to send to school. However, her father turned her down every time.

The reason why Fang's father insisted on giving her education was that he wanted her daughter to have a chance to improve her life. The obstacles he faced in learning English convinced him that formal education was essential to the life chance of his child. Therefore, he decided to disregard the advice from his elder sister who pointed out education for a girl was a waste. According to Fang, her father was a member of the trade union of postman in China. His enlightened ideas towards her receiving education might be influenced by communist ideas which criticized the inequality of sexes.

Fang expressed that she was greatly moved by the experiences of his father. He spent the evenings on learning English in an evening school but was forced to stop under financial strain. However, her father went on acquiring a certain command of the language through self-study and the assistance of his friend. Her father always encouraged her to continue the study no matter how hard it was and expected that one day she was able to live on her own. Fang understood that she had to treasure every chance to learn as education was not given but something one needed to fight for. Fang was proud of having such an assertive father who had set a good example for her. She also expressed her gratitude to her father for removing the barriers to education for her.

In Chinese society of the early twentieth century, families were still usually regarded as fortresses which imposed seclusion and imprisonment upon the female members, especially daughters. They lived in a conservative environment which limited their freedom and activities. But it was interesting to find that families could also be the sources of support and encouragement as liberal-minded

grandfathers and fathers might support their children to have new courses (Croll, pp.53-56). This explains why Fang was able to avoid the interference from her conservative aunt. Fang's father was her shield.

'Support from mothers tended to be less overt, secretive, indirect and felt by daughters rather than openly articulated within the family' (Croll, p.56). Fang never forgot the support of her mother in sheltering her from the criticism of her aunt and the way her mother cared about her during the school days. However, Qing's mother was a woman with independent thinking and exerted direct influence on her daughters as well as the *Mui Tsai*. Qing firmly believed that the difference between her mother and other traditional women was a consequence of education. Qing also learned from her mother that literacy was the gateway to infinite knowledge and a way to develop correct attitude.

The father of Ru was typical in Guangzhou. On the one hand, he received traditional education and value system; on the other hand, he was able to go into contact with the changing society. He treasured tradition so he asked his eldest son to follow his path. At the same time, he displayed his appreciation of equality, liberty and personal growth as he allowed his children to seek their own "worlds". The parents of Qing were liberal-minded persons who believed in such a principle as equality. This can be seen from their treatments to their children and *Mui Tsai* [1]. Qing's father worked as a judge in the Qing government and later as a lawyer in a firm. This showed that he received education in late Qing period and at the same time he was affected by the influx of western learning. This was especially true of the people living in Guangzhou, the single port opened to foreigners before China was opened.

For the whole Republican era, state educational subsidy was seldom provided. Students had to bear most of the financial burden through costly school fees. Thus, family background became a key factor for obtaining education, especially for the girls (Huang, 1996: p.21). The school fees for private middle schools were even higher than the public ones. For example, students of First Public School in Guangdong needed to pay 88 *yuan* for annual school fees but students of True Light Middle School needed to pay 154 *yuan* annually (Liang, 1993: pp.248-249). In other words, modern education was the privilege of the elite minority. Qing and Ru came from well-to-do families which financially made their education possible. Rong belonged to a middle-class family which managed to support her schooling. But Fang was not so lucky. She needed to face financial strain and it was in this aspect that her father's whole-hearted support must be deeply appreciated.

The urban centres in the coastal area were special places in which traditional and western values coexisted. These were also the spots where cultural interaction took place. This combination of different cultures presented a contrast which was easily realized by the people there. In term of physical setting, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, community life and methods of teaching, modern schools were far superior and attractive than the traditional ones. As long as money was not a problem, people would choose the former. That was reason why Rong made her choice.

Social mobility was another factor illustrating the popularity of modern school. A complete national education system presented a social ladder for the students like the civil service examination before 1905. Therefore, when compared with the private academies, studying in modern school would mean a brighter future (Huang, 1996: pp.19-20). Of course, the transformation of society had

provided more opportunity of employment for women. For example, teachers, nurses, preachers as well as clerks. These were new occupations which could not be found in the past.

Note:

[1] The treatment of Qing's parents to *Mui Tsai* and the close relationship among them can be demonstrated by the following cases as recollected by Qing herself:

‘My parents taught us to regard *Mui Tsai* as family members. My mother always reminded us to respect them so we studied and played together. I remembered that one of our *Mui Tsai* fell in love with a hawker who once came to our house to ask for a date with the *Mui Tsai*. My mother had a long talk with the hawker so that she could know more about him. In the end, my mother allowed the *Mui Tsai* to date with her boyfriend after she had finished her job in the evening and promised to behave decently. Later, when they got married, my mother even prepared some dowry for the *Mui Tsai*. Now the couples have become rich and live in Canada. Even to these days we maintain close contact. They always visit me whenever they return to China.’

‘We had developed good relations with our *Mui Tsai* since the childhood. One of them served for my brother and his family for her whole life. When the Red Guards were persecuting my brother during the Cultural Revolution, the *Mui Tsai* tried to protect my mother and my brother's properties. As the Red Guards sealed the house and attempted to drive her away, she refused by telling them that the house belonged to her master, nobody had the right to send her away. My brother was so deeply moved that after she died, he arranged a funeral for her and treated her as his close relative.’

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE GIRLS' SCHOOL

The previous chapter examines the lives of the four respondents in their own contexts and offers a longitudinal dimension to the discussion in the coming chapters. In this chapter, the origins and the development of the First Public School for girls in Guangdong are traced so as to give their life as middle school students a more detailed historical context. The sources of students of the School are also estimated with data from the graduate magazine.

7.1. The Origins

The establishment of the First Public School for Girls in Guangdong was a result of the resolution of the National Educational Conference held in 1928. It was decided that co-education in public schools should be terminated and education should be provided to boys and girls separately. Since there was a need to open more schools for girls, the first one was scheduled to set up in Tianma Lane in Guangzhou. Work formally started as the Preparatory Committee, of which the first principal was also a member, was formed in the same year (EBG, 1928: p.8-9). Since it was the first Public school for girls in Guangdong, its experimental nature was quite obvious. It was originally planned to establish three more similar girl schools in Shaoquan, Shantou and Zhanjiang. Therefore, the experience of the First School would be valuable as an example (Pan, 1983: p.1 & Wang, 1998: p.6). The School followed the American system prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s with three years of junior middle education and three years of senior middle education. Junior students needed to sit for public examination to compete for a place in senior classes. The School started to enroll students in late July and a new school was born.

7.2. Development of the School

The history of the School can be divided into three phases. The first phase lasted from 1928 to 1933. The First School for girls was inaugurated in the campus of a former Physical Education Normal School for girls at Tianma Lane and gradually developed into a comprehensive public middle school for girls (EBG, 1928: p.8). With the expansion of the number of students, a new campus was erected in 1934 and the School was moved to Tengfeng Road. There was a greater development of the School because the facilities were among the best in the province. The third phase lasted from 1937 to 1938 which, under the threat of Japanese invasion, was the most difficult time of the School. The School moved to Liangjiao, a rural area near Guangzhou. Below is an account of the three periods with their main distinctive characteristics.

7.2.1. The *Tianma Lane* period (1928-33)

There were three principals during this period. The first one was Nu who was originally the principal of the First Normal School for Girls in Guangdong. Nu Lanfang was appointed because of her experience and contribution in education. She was renowned for her liberal-mindedness and advocated women's rights in China. Nu fought for the abolition of foot-binding and was against warlordism. When she was twenty six years old she was appointed the principal of a Normal school. Nu resigned as a result of a serious sickness and was replaced by Yip who just stayed a year in the School. The third principal was Lin who was a graduate of Paris University and was specialized in the study of women education of China. Lin was appointed because of her close relationship with Guomindang and government officials. It was during her term that the School was moved to a newly established campus at Tengfeng Road.

In 1931, the Manchurian Incident broke out and Japan's ambition to detach Manchuria from China was obvious. There was a nationwide anti-Japanese campaign in which the Chinese people went on strikes and demonstrations, boycotted Japanese products and collected funds to support the soldiers in Northeast of China. This incident also constituted a part of school experience of the students. Nationalism touched both the teachers and students as they organized and participated in anti-Japanese activities such as fund-raising programmes, anti-Japanese street dramas and speech competitions. They also went on demonstrations and joined the students' petition to the GMD for resistance (Wang, 1998: p.7).

During this period, the School recruited most of its teachers. The School put emphasis on the promotion of academic performance so a strong teaching force must be employed to meet the needs. Experienced teachers and graduates from overseas universities were invited to teach in the School. Graduates from famous Normal Schools were also recruited, for example, the Beijing Normal University and Guangdong Higher Normal School. The experienced teaching force was famous for their patience, intelligence and liveliness as they implanted knowledge in the minds of the students. They were willing to have close contact with students after lesson and school. A strong sense of belonging was built up in the early years of the school.

Besides classroom activities, extra-curricular activities were also organized to diversify the school life. The students were particularly outstanding in sports and debate. The School also organized outdoor activities for the whole school such as school picnics and visits. The students led a simple life as the campus was not very large, the classrooms were old and there was only one open area for all sorts of sport training. In order to promote simplicity, the Ministry of Education

standardized the school uniform of public schools. Students were required to encouraged to wear simple clothes all the time (Wang, 1998: p.7)

As a public school, the school reflected the domination of the ruling party. The Three People's Principle was transmitted through assembly and rituals. Students were required to recite the will of Dr Sun Yat-sen and national anthem was sung in important occasions. The principal and the discipline master were responsible for disseminating the official ideology to the staff and the students. It was expected that revolutionary spirit of the Nationalist Party could be continued. Communism was not tolerated especially in the early 1930s when anti-Communist campaigns were launched. A student was interrogated after she was found reading 'forbidden books' and not many teachers talked about communism in normal lessons (Wang, 1998: p.7). There was a students union with representatives from different classes. However, the head of the union was appointed by and under the supervision of the School. Besides some extra-curricular activities, the union was mainly responsible for selling stationery to the schoolmates. It was more like a welfare association than a body in which democracy was exercised. As a matter of fact, similar students unions were encouraged in other public middle schools in China during the Republican rule.

7.2.2. The *Tengfeng* Period (1934-37)

In 1934, the School moved to the new campus which consisted of a main building of three storeys, a school hall, a canteen, a library, laboratories, hostels for teachers and students and later a gymnasium. The students were proud of mentioning all these facilities, as they were much better than those in the old campus. They felt that they were lucky to have such a beautiful place for studying.

The School retained most of the teachers recruited in the first phase and added new members from the Zhongshan University. Physical Education teachers were also invited as part-time coaches to train the school teams. Extra-curricular activities were further strengthened. Apart from those mentioned in the first phase, sports day, inter-class drama competition, singing contest, calligraphy competition were organized to enrich school life. The School also built up its fame as students had outstanding performance in inter-school competitions. In academic work, the students also achieved excellent results. In 1936, most of the junior students were successful in gaining the right to stay in the School after the public examination.

Owing to the change of personnel in the Ministry of Education of the Guangdong province, Lin resigned in 1935 and was replaced by Li, a returned educator from the United States. A year later, Li was replaced by Tang who was a wife of a Guomindang general. According to the respondents, no great change was witnessed as a result of the change in leadership as it was too short for them to leave any stamp on the School.

The Nationalist government at Nanjing had to face the increasing pressure from Japan as well as the challenge from the Chinese Communist Party during this period. There were cases that some of the students were advised to leave the School because of their political orientation. Inside the School, patriotic education was transmitted through morning assemblies and taught by some of the teachers. There was also the debate on whether the second united front between the two parties might be possible among some of the teachers and students. It seemed that everybody sensed the urgency of promoting nationalism in the face of foreign invasion. On the other hand, the state ideology of the Three People's Principles was still stressed and all the rituals reflecting the ruling Nationalist Party were performed during important occasions.

7.2.3. The *Liangjiao* Period (1937-38)

After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (7th July, 1937), Japan launched a series of attacks by bombing the major cities in China. Guangzhou, being the most prosperous and important city in the south, was of no exception. Like most of the educational institutes, the School evacuated to Liangjiao in the county of Shunde, not too far away from Guangzhou. There the students continued their study but the number was greatly reduced.

In times of difficulty, the students needed to cultivate a strong and independent character. The senior students were responsible for taking care of younger sisters in both academic work and daily life. Ancestral halls were changed into classrooms and hostels and textbooks were shared among the students. Besides teaching, teachers needed to give life training and protection to the students. As a result, the relations between teachers and students were much closer than before.

During this period, education was characterized by the combination of study with nationalism. The form and nature of extra-curricular activities were also changed to meet the needs of the time. Anti-Japanese plays were staged, anti-Japanese songs were sung, and folk dances were danced in the evening or by the fireside. The students gained new experiences by living with the peasants whose life was simple and difficult. There was also a radicalization of the students in rural areas. Communist infiltration was pronounced and some students were persuaded to go to Yanan to join the communist revolution. Some stayed behind to help the peasant guerilla forces. Morale was high among the students in the face of Japanese invasion (Liang, 1998: p.9).

In October 1938, Guangzhou was besieged and the neighbouring counties were in great danger. The School divided the teachers and students into three groups: One group went back to Guangzhou, another group moved to Hong Kong and Macao while the third group left for north Guangdong, all led by teachers. The teachers and students who settled in Hong Kong organized Self-Study classes so that formal education could be continued. There was the problem of finding a place to study for the students because of the lack of money. Eventually, they borrowed classrooms from the Xiangjiang School and studied in the evening. Each student paid a small amount of money as school fee while most of the teachers did not receive any salary. The subjects offered included languages, mathematics, sciences, history, Chinese history and geography. Due to the lack of manpower and proper place, such subjects as physical education, art, music and home economics were cut. It was the wish of the teachers to offer basic knowledge to the students so that they were able to continue with formal schooling after the War. It was not until the colony fell into the hands of Japan in 1940 were the classes dissolved. The teachers and students dispersed and returned to Mainland China.

Within its short history of just more than a decade, distinctive features of the First School could be discerned. The first period stressed the need of having a good foundation for future development and of setting an example for other public schools for girls. Priority was given to the recruitment of a strong teaching force and the academic training of students. This corresponded with the depoliticization policy of the ruling Party which drew the attention of students to academic work. The most important posts in the School were appointed by the government such as the principal, master of discipline and teachers of *Dangyi* to ensure official control. Simplicity of life was emphasized which, according to the respondents, was quite different from the extravagant school culture of the mission schools. The School was born in a time when nationalism was the language of the days so students were

imbued with a strong sense of anti-imperialism as magnified in anti-Japanese activities. In fact, even the teachers were influenced by the sweeping events of Japanese encroachment and joined hand in hand with their students.

The second period was characterized with an emphasis on both academic work and the diversification of extra-curricular activities. More experienced and talented teachers were recruited [1]. These emphases together with the new campus not only helped to provide more opportunities for self-actualization but also foster a self-identity on the part of students. There was a sense of pride to be a member of the School. To a certain extent, the government succeeded in diverting the attention of students from politics. However, the growing tension between CCP and GMD and the increasing pressure from Japan had permeated the daily life so that more or less the students were affected. This could be seen from the some students' participation of study groups organized by pro-Communist activists in Zhangshan University. Official ideology was still inculcated as far as possible but Communism was not unknown to students as both the teachers and students had different means to discuss it outside classroom.

The moving of the campus to the countryside exposed the students to a variety of experiences. Through the contact with the peasants, they gained a deeper understanding of the country and life of other social classes. The invasion of enemies made them even more patriotic than before as it was not just a matter of life and death, it was also a matter of national pride. Their extra-curricular activities contained elements of nationalism which served to awaken the masses. This was a special kind of education to both the students and the people. The relationship between teachers and students was much closer than before as they faced a common destiny. The moving of the campus also increased students' contact with the Communists working in the rural areas. Under the influence of Communism,

some of them went to Yanan to join the revolution. It was clear that the circumstances of the time had increased the popularity of the Chinese Communist Party.

7.3. Sources of Students

The School mainly served the students in Guangzhou although some of them did come from the neighbouring counties, especially the better off counties in the Pearl delta. In its first year, the School needed to accept the female students from other middle schools in the city as co-education was encouraged. There were girls coming from famous middle schools such as Guangya Middle School and First Normal School. Some came from private middle schools mostly run by western missions. A new class was enrolled from the families in the city. Within a short time, the School turned into a place famous for its high academic standard and outstanding performance in extra-curricular activities.

An analysis of the graduates' permanent addresses in the Graduate Magazine of 1937, Most of the students lived in Guangzhou. Of the 76 graduates, 58 were citizens of the city. 14 of them came from various neighbouring counties including the Zhongshan, Dongguan, Weizhou, Panyu, Jiangman, Xinxing and Taishan. Two came from Guangxi and another two from Hong Kong. The School served mainly for the urban dwellers and the counties nearby (GM, 1937). Some of the counties were the more prosperous regions in the province such as Zhongshan, Panyu and Dongguan where the people could afford to send their children to Guangzhou to study. Taishan and Jiangman were comparatively lower in living standard but the former was famous for its connection with overseas Chinese. There was no student coming from the more remote rural areas and the less developed counties of the north and the west where living standard were lower than

the Zhujiang Delta area. This reflected that the targets of the Girls' School were the daughters of the wealthier middle class in the city and the well off counties nearby.

In fact, two of the respondents were forced to leave the school for economic reason. They continued their schooling in the Girls' Normal School where school fee was exempted and financial subsidy was offered. It illustrated the importance of financial support to the students studying in the First School for Girls. Besides, concentration of middle schools in the cities made middle education in the rural areas inaccessible (Perkins & Yusuf, 1984: p.165). A more complete national education system could only be found in the cities and it showed that there was a great disparity in the educational development between urban and rural areas. Of course, students in rural areas might need other sort of curriculum which was different from the elitist education in the city.

Note:

[1] One of the teachers recruited in this period was the great artist, Zhao Shaoang. He died in Hong Kong in 1997 and is generally regarded as one of the masters in the Lingnan School of Chinese painting.

CHAPTER EIGHT: RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOLING PROCESSES

In order to reconstruct the schooling process of the School, the main aspects of school life will be examined. It is reconstructed through the perspectives and experiences of the respondents and the meanings of school life to them will also be analyzed. In this chapter, the essentials of the school life will be touched upon. They include the physical environment, the social environment, the curriculum, the extra-curricular activities, the hidden curriculum, critical events of the school and the outer environment.

8.1. The Physical Environment

Quoting from the tradition of symbolic interactionism, Woods (1970) states that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. They inhabit two different worlds: the 'natural' world and the social world. How people attribute meanings to the external world and objects makes them human and social. In this section, the perspectives of the respondents towards their school environment are first examined. And the activities took place in the school environment are also introduced.

The First School of Girls of Guangdong was developed on the site of a normal school. It consisted of a main building and a few two-story buildings. Behind the main building was an open area where all the outdoor activities took place. Both the teachers and students faced some inconvenience, especially the physical education teachers. In order to plan the future development, the first principal got the consent and funds from the Ministry of Education to build a new

school site. It was carefully planned to meet the needs of the school and finally the new campus was completed in 1934.

In the autumn of 1934, the First School of Girls was moved to the new site at *Tengfeng* Road. It was well accommodated, with a main building for teaching and administrative purposes, sufficient classrooms, school hall, laboratories, music room, art room, library, domestic science room, hostels for both staff and students, gymnasium and open field. The students of the Girls' School were proud of having such a modern campus with up-dated facilities. 'To study in such a beautiful campus is something one can hardly dream of', Rong pointed out. When she recalled the first day she studied in the new campus, 'we were extremely excited that day. The things we talked focused on the new buildings and facilities. It was impossible for me to be concentrated during lessons. After school, many classmates stayed behind and visited every corner of the school. In fact, our class teacher had led us to take a look at the main building already. Most of us felt that we were lucky to study here because when compared with other middle schools, ours was the most modern and beautiful.' Rong said, 'There were more open areas for us to play ball games. I liked playing basketball with my classmates after school but in the old campus, there was simply not enough space.' 'I liked music lessons because I could go to the music room where our teacher played the piano and we sang western folk songs. It was a time for relaxation.'

Ru loved (even today she still loves reading) literature very much and always spent some time reading novels and literature in the school library after school. 'Our school was not the largest in the city but it was most modern at the time. It was nice to have a walk round the campus with the best classmates. The environment was peaceful and quiet if you did not get near the basketball court. I like our library because I could always find some books to read. Anyway, we were

quite satisfied to have such a proper place to study.’ Ru added. ‘The school hall was another place I would not forget. It was big enough to hold all the schoolmates. I liked the atmosphere of being together during assemblies. It was also the place where most of the large-scale extra-curricular activities took place, for instance, drama competition, debate, speech-making competition so and so forth. It was the place the Speech Day was held. You know how special it was when the whole school sang the school song. I felt that I belonged to the place.’

The First School for Girls was famous for its outstanding performance in extra-curricular activities and academic work. It is generally believed that physical environment is of great importance to the achievements of individuals. In the accounts of the graduates, the campus had facilitated the teaching and learning activities and fostered a sense of belonging in them.

In the first place, the school provided facilities for the girls to actualize themselves and broaden their experiences which might be available only to male students before. The physical environment also enabled the cultivation of a school culture which stressed both sports and academic performance. When compared with the old campus, there was more space and facilities for sports. This made the development of various school teams possible with students having more opportunity to develop their potentials. Sports had been one of the most effective means to develop character and strengthen body. And through the participation in extra-curricular activities, the students were able to develop a sense of achievement and belonging. In addition, the campus enabled students to increase interaction among themselves by opening up more social space for them. This helped strengthen the group identity of the girls. Moreover, the school facilities brought about a sense of pride and a commitment to improvement through studying. This in turn would raise the self-image of students.

8.2. Assembly

Every Monday, the teaching staff and the students would gather in the school to listen to announcements from the school and most important of all the teaching and sharing of the principal and other senior teachers. In the hall, the picture of Sun Yat-sen was hung on the wall and beside it his will was also shown. It was required that the students must bow their heads to the picture and read out Sun's will. After 1929, the party anthem of Guomindang was adopted as national song [1] and students were required to sing the national song during assembly time. In any official gathering, the same practice was repeated. In fact, similar practice was also followed in all other public schools as it was stipulated by the Ministry of Education. The government intended to exercise greater control and exert great influence by deciding the themes of the assembly. The persons in charge of it were also restricted to certain number of teaching staff. (Peake, 1970: pp.135-136; Huang, 1996: p.86). As a matter of fact, the assembly time was the most important means to implement value education by the school. It was also one of the most effective ways to pass official ideology to the students by the government, especially during a period of increasing Communist activism in China.

The four respondents expressed their views and feelings towards it in their own ways:

'I like the atmosphere of being together. We sang the song and read the will together. I felt that we all belonged to this place and share a common goal to learn to be a useful person. In the assembly, you could listen to the teachings of the principal who always encouraged us to work hard and be a good student. For every

week there was a special theme or topic, so you could broaden your experience through the sharing of the principal and teachers.’ Ru said in a serious manner.

‘It was good to have all the students in the school because it seemed that we were united together. I like the sharing of the principal who would tell us about her life as a female student. But I did not like the teaching of the discipline master who always ask us to correct our mistakes. I did not think that it was necessary to repeat singing the song and reading the will because it was a kind of formalism. We should do this in a really important gathering such as graduation ceremony.’ Fang said.

‘I preferred to listen to the teachers’ sharing on current issues and national affairs I did not like the tune of the national anthem especially when you compared with those in the 101 song album. The arrangement was made by the government not by the school and I learned this from a teacher. The school intended to teach us attentiveness, cooperation, respect and the importance of order through the teaching and sharing of the principal. Sometimes, they repeated the messages and you felt fed up. But I must admit that the feeling of belonging to the school was very strong.’ Rong recalled.

Qing said frankly, ‘sometimes it was rather monotonous because they always repeat the same messages to you. I wanted the time to be lighter so I would pay attention to the personal sharing of the principal. For example, her life as an overseas student, the culture of other countries and interesting stories of different peoples and places. I like classroom learning because the teachers would tell us more interesting things.’

From the words of the respondents, the aims and contents of school assembly can be discerned. Assembly was used as the most formal occasion to introduce the Party Principles – the Three People's Principles. The respondents expressed that every now and then Sun's ideas were mentioned and interpreted by the principals and teachers. Functionalists states that school is an agent of socialization that passes on norms and values of the society to the students. Besides curriculum, the message can be delivered through hidden curriculum. In this case, assembly time was manipulated for this purpose. Students were socialized to accept it as something indispensable to the development of the country. In order to train up good citizens with high moral standard, moral and civic education was stressed. It was important to produce responsible youths who supported (or at least not to threaten) the existing regime. Given the fact that China was facing foreign invasion and that nationalism was the language of the days, patriotic education must be included. It should not be monopolized and interpreted by the opposing party. In addition, extra-curricular knowledge would be given so as to broaden the horizon of the students. Of course one of the aims of assembly was, as already pointed out by the respondents themselves, to promote a group identity and a sense of belonging among the students. And it was this profound impact of mass meeting that had exerted great influence on them.

It was interesting to find that Fang criticized the way the master of discipline handled with the assembly. She thought it was a kind of formalism as the message was repeated all the time. But after she became the principal of a primary school, she was the one to perform the same duty in the campus. The main difference was just the message. It seems that the dynamics of mass meeting was exploited universally.

All my respondents admitted that the school song had exerted profound influence on them. According to the respondents, since there was no school motto, the students tended to treat the school song as representing the spirit of the school. Today they still sing the school together when they have gatherings to recapture their golden days in the school.

‘The school is a lighthouse giving us light in the darkness to show us the correct direction, for we have teachers to tell me what was right and what was wrong. The lyrics urged me to think about myself: why I was born, how I can contribute to the family, nation and society with my virtues and knowledge. It taught me that girls were not inferior to boys and both sexes were equal. Therefore, in my whole life, I have tried to contribute to my family and country and lived up to the teachings in the song.’ Fang recalled.

Ru liked the lyrics very much and according to her it was the most inspiring song she had ever sung. ‘We were born in a society in which girls could not enjoy same rights with boys. I was lucky to have an open-minded father but many girls still suffered from discrimination in the family and society. The school song reminded me to march forward with virtues, knowledge and talent and pointed out the values of education to girls. As girls we could contribute to the country and society as much as males.’

Both Rong and Qing expressed similar opinions as Ru and Fang. Qing added, ‘the moment I treasured most during the assembly was the time we sang the school song together. I liked both the tune and the lyrics and the way we sang in the school hall. I was moved every time we sang it.’ Rong said, ‘It told us how fortunate we were to have teachers to guide us when we were young. It also reminded us to be responsible persons in the society.’

Upon closer examination of the lyrics of the school song, certain main ideas can be discerned. In the first place, the orthodoxy and leadership of the Nationalist Party were confirmed as the girls marched under the national flag. The political meaning of the lyrics was obvious and indoctrination of official ideology must permeate in everyday life. Next, the idea of equality of sexes was stressed. Given that the history of women's right movement was short in China and the influence of tradition and customs was still strong in the country, the school's advocate of equality of both sexes should be regarded as an enlightened stance. Then, the responsibility towards the nation, society and family was greatly emphasized. Individuals were reminded to contribute to the community and the state which in turn provided opportunities for the students. Clearly, it was one of the main reasons why education was given. Lastly, the benefits of studying in the school were raised. Under the guidance of teachers and with personal search for knowledge, the girls would become successful and blessed. The power of the school song came from its fusion of realism and idealism.

Fang found the school song meaningful in raising her consciousness of equality of both sexes and her responsibility towards nation and society. It explains why she was more active political participation immediately after the setting up of the new regime and her progressiveness in teaching work. Even today, Fang was glad to enjoy good health because she could help other people. Rong and Qing also saw the importance of being responsible members of the society. They treasured the days they spent in the school and the things learned from teachers. The song reminds them of the benefits of schooling and that they were the privileged few when they were young.

There has been a change in part of the lyrics of the school song. The phrase meaning the 'hoisting of national flag before us' was replaced by 'anti-imperialistic and anti-feudal' to make it politically correct. All respondents accepted the change for the new phrase denoted more profound and meaningful goals. However, it must be pointed out that the national flag represented the Republican government which had disappeared in Mainland China and was unacceptable to the CCP. Whether the existing regime tolerates it or not depends on the political climate and the attitude of the ruling party. A one-party government tends to exercise total control through various means and eradicate any opposing ideas under all circumstances so as to ensure effective control. In this case, part of the lyrics was replaced with the revolutionary language of the CCP which not only shows the disrespect of history but the degree of tolerance on the part of the ruling party.

In conclusion, the attitude and value expressed by the respondents, though not completely the same, were similar to one another. They treasured the time of being together to sing school song, listen to moral teaching and sharing of teachers and principals because all these reminded them of their elitist status and special identity. They were the privileged few that could receive education in the first public school for girls in the city. The presence of all students in school uniform in the assembly reminded them they all belonged to the big family. As expressed by Ru, 'I like the atmosphere of being together, we all belonged to the place. We learned and played together'. What was more, the patriotic ideas and nationalism were conveyed through the elaboration of Dr Sun's ideology and the singing of school song sometimes transcended party politics. For instance, the nationalistic feeling aroused by the Manchurian Incident was nationwide and the ideas of equality between both sexes were not confined to China. As a result, the national identity of the students must be developed which helped explain why all the respondents participated in anti-Japanese activities later.

8.3. Curriculum

In 1929, the Ministry of Education promulgated tentative regulations of curriculum for middle schools. The most prominent changes were as follow:

- (1) Party Principles (*dangyi*) [2] was added to both lower and upper middle education.
- (2) Boy Scout was added to the curriculum of lower middle schools. Military training was included in upper middle education.
- (3) Elective of subjects was abolished in junior middle schools.
- (4) The separation between Arts and Science was abolished.

There was an increase in student movements in the middle schools as a result of the influence of Communist Party and the students' interest in politics. In fact, Communist infiltration had been quite extensive and one of the examples was the Communist infiltration into the famous Whampao Military Academy (Li, 1994: p.20). The Nationalist government intended to exercise control and discipline over the schools. Therefore, Party Principles was introduced to the middle schools to counterbalance the influence of competing ideology. Teachers of the Party Principles and the masters of discipline must be members of the GMD and were appointed by the government so as to ensure proper transmission of values to students. Boy scout was also added to provide official ideology and a disciplined life for the junior form students. Through military training, the government could strengthen the indoctrination of official ideology on the one hand and prepare for any open conflict with another country on the other. (Zhou, 1933: p.174). Chen (1962) also states that

such arrangements aimed to help pacify possible social disturbances on one hand and strengthen students' health for the defense of the nation (Chen, 1962: p.175).

In 1929, the government did not allow students to form student associations and in 1930, student unions were encouraged to take charge of student affairs within schools. However, they were closely supervised by teachers and details of activities organized had to submit to the GMD for record (Zhou, 1933: P.175).

Table 1: Subjects in Junior Middle Schools (1929)

Subjects	Points
Party Principles (<i>dangyi</i>)	6
Chinese Language	36
Foreign Language	20 (30)
History	12
Geography	12
Mathematics	30
Natural Science	15
Health Science	4
Drawing	6
Music	6
Physical Education	9
Craftsmanship	9
Vocational Subjects	15 (5)
Boy Scout	0
Total Points	180

Table 2: Subjects in Senior Middle Schools (1929)

Subjects	Points
Party Principles (<i>dangyi</i>)	6
Chinese Language	24
Foreign Language	26
Mathematics	19
Chinese History	6
World History	6
Geography (China)	3
Geography (World)	3
Physics	8
Chemistry	8
Biology	8
Military Training/Military Nursing	6
Physical Education	9
Electives	18
Total Points	150

(Sources: Zhou, 1933: p.164)

In November 1932, the Ministry of Education formally announced the curriculum for middle schools and the following changes had been made:

- (1) The point system was replaced by hour system.
- (2) Electives were abolished.
- (3) Time for Self Study was arranged during school hours.
- (4) Party Principles was replaced by Civic Education.
- (5) Natural Science was divided into Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology.

- (6) Craftsmanship was replaced by Art and Design
- (7) Ethics was added to senior middle education.

Table 3: Subjects in Junior Middle School & Total Time of Study Per Week
(1932)

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year		
Subjects	First term	Second term	First term	Second term	First term	Second term	Total
Civics	2	2	2	2	1	1	10
Physical Education	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Hygiene	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Chinese	6	6	6	6	6	6	36
English	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
Mathematics	4	4	5	5	5	5	28
Botany	2	2					4
Zoology	2	2					4
Chemistry			4	3			7
Physics					4	3	7
History	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Geography	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Art	2	2	2	2	4	4	16
Drawing	2	2	2	2	1	1	10
Music	2	2	1	1	1	1	8
Total teaching hours per week	35	35	35	34	35	34	
Self study hours per week	13	13	13	14	13	14	

**Table 4: Subjects in Senior Middle School & Total Time of Study Per Week
(1932)**

Subjects	First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Total
	First term	Second term	First term	Second term	First term	Second term	
Civics	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Hygiene		2					2
Chinese	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
English	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
Mathematics	4	4	3	3	3	3	20
Biology	5	5					10
Chemistry			7	6			13
Physics					6	6	12
Chinese History	4	2	2				8
History				2	2	2	6
Geography (China)	2	2	2				6
Geography (World)				2	2	2	6
Ethics						2	2
Drawing	1	1	2	2	2	2	10
Music	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Total teaching	35	35	35	34	35	34	

Hours per week							
Self study hours per week	13	13	13	14	13	14	

(Sources: Zhou, 1933: pp.165-166)

The curriculum clearly reflected that the government encouraged academic performance so as to divert students’ attention from politics. This was part of the depoliticization policy adopted by the GMD to check student activism (Huang, 1996). In terms of the number of hours, the main subjects of languages and mathematics were stressed. The achievement in these subjects would help students further their education in the colleges. It was interesting to find that physical education was greatly emphasized in terms of time. It was important to improve the health as well as discipline of students to face challenges in the future. Although Party Principles was replaced by Civics, it was old wine in a new bottle. The Three People’s principles as an official and dominant ideology were still stressed.

As the history of the school nearly coincided with the rule of the Nationalist Government at Nanjing, the curriculum also reflected the policy of the period (see the tables above for details). According to Huang (1996), Chiang intended to check the growth of student activism by adopting the policy depoliticization. One of the ways was to encourage the students to concentrate on academic pursuits and self-cultivation (Huang, p.84). Wang (1966) also points out that the goal of education at all levels was to achieve moral and academic excellence (Wang, 1966: p.500). The school partook the characteristics of the other comprehensive schools of the time. The purpose of education was to train students for advancement to the next level of schooling. The students who entered the First School for Girls were also regarded as future elites of the society, therefore academic performance was emphasized.

One of the incentives was that those who could get an average score over 80 in the final examination, school fees would be exempted for the next year. Fang pointed out that only 5 out of 120 students were successful in passing the entrance examination. 'I was lucky to be one of the five.' Fang said humbly. By instilling a sense of pride and superiority in the minds of successful students, the government had consolidated the depoliticization policy.

There was argument among the educators at that time on what kind of curriculum should be given to the youths. Some argued that the comprehensive curriculum pointed to elitism and ignored the practicality of vocational training. Neither could it help the graduates to find jobs after they left schools nor cater to the needs of the society. Similar ideas were raised by the authors of the Report of the League of Nations (Pepper, 1996: pp.40-41). Although senior students were given a choice to take domestic science, most students opted for general academic course (Pepper, 1996: p.41). The situation was similar in the First School for Girls as most of the girls aimed at entering tertiary education after graduation. However, the school did introduce some electives for the students and they were mostly vocational in nature, for example, sewing, typing, chinaware making and nursery. Some of the electives were cultural in nature such as Japanese, French and piano lessons but according to Qing and Rong, domestic science was one of the most popular subjects in the school. 'Many of us found domestic science both practical and interesting. It was practical because we really learned how to cook something and set the table before meal. We could also try to apply what was learned at home. It was interesting in the sense that we had to learn table manners at the same time. Sometimes, the teacher would tell us more about the countries from which the dishes came. It was one of the ways to understand more about another culture.' Rong said.

Party Principles (*dangyi*) as a subject was required to study in junior middle education. It was an educational instrument for moulding a new generation of students which would share the GMD's political outlook (Huang, 1996). But in 1932 it was replaced by Civics studies in both junior and senior education. However, the content was more or less the same as it placed emphasis upon the Three People's Principles of Dr Sun. Ru was interested in Dr Sun's ideas when she was a student and started to think about the problems of China as delineated by Sun. Today, Ru still finds some of Sun's ideas pragmatic and should be put into practice.

Another feature of the curriculum was the emphasis of Classics reading. It was the idea of Chen Jitang to make Classics reading compulsory in the public schools. In fact, since the establishment of the Republican government in 1911, the demand for studying Chinese Classics died hard. Yuan Shihkai made an attempt to restore the reading of Classics after he became the President. Chiang Kaishek also integrated Confucianism into the New Life Movement. In the First School for girls, scholars were employed to teach the girls the Chinese Classics but both the teaching method and the content were not welcome by all the respondents in this study. They pointed out that rote learning was emphasized to memorize the text and there was no explanation, elaboration and discussion to make it more interesting. The method did not arouse any interest from them. Examination turned out to be dictation of the text only and it seemed that even the teacher himself did not see its value to the students.

Music was not so stressed in the public middle schools as it was in the mission schools. School choirs were considered as one of the most important extra-curricular activities in such private girls' schools as True Light Middle School and Pooi To Middle School. In the First School for girls, the students felt that music was also emphasized. This could be seen from the quality of the music teachers and

the formation of a choir. Students were invited to sing in the athletic meet of the province and they said it was a kind of honour. Although Rong was disappointed with the fact that she was not a member of the school choir, she loves music and singing and appreciated the teaching methods of most teachers.

Since China was facing the aggression of Japan, there was a need to provide military training to the students. In senior middle school, female students were required to attend military nursing lessons while boys were to receive military training. 'We were told that it was an important subject. It was also compulsory for us to attend the lessons. We would not have been graduated from the school if we failed in the subject. Therefore we took it very serious to study it.' Rong recalled. It was expected that after receiving some nursing knowledge, the female students would be sent to take care of the wounded soldiers in the battlefields. A special trainer, who usually came from the army, was sent to each school by the government. The training was strict and everybody was serious. The girls would learn first aid which constituted the core of the curriculum. There was some military knowledge including the introduction to the use of weapons. All the respondents agreed that it was meaningful and necessary to have some knowledge of nursing and responded to it with positive attitude. Qing, Ru and Fang found it very practical when they served the children refugees and wounded soldiers during the War of Resistance while Rong found it useful when she became the headmaster of a nursery in the 1950s. Ru said, 'the need to take the nursing course reminded me that our country was being invaded by our enemies. We should try our best to learn to prepare for the war.'

Although English was one of the main subjects in the school, it was taught as a foreign language. Unlike the mission schools in Guangzhou, which required the students to learn other subjects in English, the First School for girls stressed the

mother language. The popularity of mission school rested on the high demand and standard of English in teaching and learning. A good command of English enabled graduates of mission schools to enjoy advantage of being first considered by western universities and being recruited by the big firms in China (Liang, 1993: pp. 250-251). In the eyes of the respondents, those mission schools were elitist in style and school culture not only because importance they placed on English but also because most of the students came from the wealthy families or the upper classes of the society.

‘We learned English in English lessons but we did not have a strong English-speaking environment. Some teachers did use English to teach us such as music and physical education but it was confined to single words only. Therefore when compared to students of mission schools, we were of course weaker in English. But we would not give up any chance to improve the language since it was important at that time.’ Ru said.

‘I thought that English was important not only because it was valued by the people at large but also because it enabled us to understand the outside world, especially the US. Therefore, I tried to master it although in our school it was not as emphasized as it was in the mission schools.’ Rong and Qing had similar view. To Fang English was not simply a subject, it was a living style and a different value system. ‘Usually, the students from mission school had a different living style. They appreciated most things coming from western world including dressing, music, movie, ideas etc. They went to church and went abroad to study. This was my impression of them.’

In conclusion, the curriculum of the First School for Girls reflected the characteristics and needs of the time. It placed heavy emphasis on academic

subjects and elitist in nature. Vocational subjects were offered but they were electives only. Students were trained to further their education in the colleges. The curriculum reflected the requirements of the government as Party Principles (and later Civics) and military nursing were included. However, the control over ideological education was not as strong as it was assumed. Teachers enjoyed certain degree of autonomy in daily teaching. The curriculum was also urban bound rather than relevant to rural conditions. It was similar to most elitist education provided by the mission schools in the cities.

8.4. Extra-curricular Activities

As mentioned above, the First School was famous for its emphasis upon extra-curricular activities. The students have given a detailed record of these activities in the Old Students' Magazines. They included various ball games, drama contest, music contest, speech-making competition, verse-speaking competition, writing competition, swimming gala, school picnic, visits to factories and government departments, calligraphy competition, typing competition and even fancy dress party. Surely, the girls led a rich school life during their stay in the school. When compared with classroom learning, these extra-curricular activities provided lighter moments for the students. Besides these, the school also organized long trip to the neighbouring counties, Macao and Hong Kong so as to give more exposure to the girls. Moreover, there were the scouting activities such as camping and bonfire which added new experiences to the daily learning.

Rong was very excited the night before she went on a picnic in junior secondary grades. 'Early in the morning, my classmates and I went to the restaurant to buy some food for breakfast as well as for lunch. We shared the food with one another. For example, peanuts, bread, cakes, biscuits and rice dumplings. We got

on the lorry prepared by the school. Some sat on the space while other stood on it to have a better view of the scenery. We played a variety of games in the open field and teachers were invited to play with us. Those were the happiest moments of my school life.' Rong also found scouting interesting and fruitful. 'I could learn rope knotting and how to set up a camp from the captain. It looked quite smart when you put on the uniform and it was good to learn to live a disciplined life. There were the teachings and principles to guide you to be a good scout. I felt that I could contribute to others through services and my worth was confirmed.'

Ru had great interest in reading and writing so she would like to take part in writing competition. 'I like to express my opinions and feelings through writing. I tried different forms of writing, diary, prose, poem and short novel. It is a creative process in which I benefited from logical thinking and unbound imagination. I take the things I write as a record of my thought and life. My teacher had encouraged me to participate in writing competition and I got merit in the end.' Ru was a frequent contributor to newspapers when she was still a student for it brought her satisfaction.

Qing and Fang were more active than Ru. They always played ball games after school. Fang did not have a strong body when she was small so she wanted to do more exercises through sports and ball games. Qing described herself as a 'naughty girl' and was active in all sorts of sports. She would participate in any inter-class competitions concerning sports. 'My sister Yin was a member of the school volleyball team and I intended to play volleyball as well as her so that I could join the school team.'

It was a kind of honour to be selected as helper by the teachers. Fang was invited by her class teacher to help him decorate the exhibition boards which would

be shown to parents and visitors. 'I was chosen because I liked designing and was able to draw beautiful pictures and diagrams. This was what my class teacher told me. I was happy to help him for he knew my strengths.'

Rong liked singing and music. Very often she went to the top floor of school to sing with her classmates. The school had placed a piano there which could be used by students for practice. Rong did not know how to play the piano so she asked her classmate to accompany her. 'We had a group of four to five classmates who liked music and singing together. We developed close relationship as we stayed together for a long time. Besides singing, we studied and did our work together. After singing, we would leave the school and go home together. The common interest brought us together like sister belonging to one family.'

Extra-curricular activities had brought about gorgeous life in the campus. Through all these activities, students had more exposure to different experiences and more chances to develop their own potentials. This was very important to the personal growth of students. The varieties of activities organized by the school seemed to attract students with different talents and interests. These activities also enable both the teachers and students to have more contacts and thus served to develop close teacher-student relationship. And of course, the sense of belonging to a big family was strengthened and continued to grow even after the school disappeared. The school was successful in enriching the school life and by doing so had left a deep impression in students' mind.

8.5. Anti-Japanese Activities

After the defeat of China in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), China had to cede Formosa, Pascadores as well as Liaodong Peninsula to Japan. With the intervention of Russia, Germany and France, Japan was forced to return Liaodong Peninsula to China. However, the territorial loss of China had stimulated a scramble for concessions in China. The imperial ambitions of the powers not only resulted in conflicts among them but also aroused the protests of the Chinese students. The students' discontent reached its climax in the May Fourth Incident when a long series of student protests took place in nearly every major city (Chow, 1967: ch. 5). Then came the May Thirtieth Incident in May 1925 and then the Manchurian Crisis in 1931. Anti-imperialistic activities in general and anti-Japanese activities in particular were common. Students went on strikes and demonstrations and formed joint school protests were also commonplace (Huang, 1996: pp. 24-26 and Christina, Kelly & Gilmartin, ch.5). Although Chiang did not like to see the growth of student activism, he had to accept it because these activities had mass support (Huang, p.83).

In Guangzhou, the news of the loss of Manchuria triggered off an anti-Japanese movement. In October 1931, there were demonstrations organized by students and calls for boycott of Japanese goods. Students also participated in donation campaigns which aimed to raise funds for anti-Japanese activities in Manchuria. In December, students from five public schools, including the First School of Girls, gathered in front of the headquarters of the First Army in Guangdong to press for immediate anti-Japanese action. In February 1932, representatives of the five public schools met at Zhongshan Memorial Hall to discuss the possibility of sending a delegation to Nanjing to petition for fighting against Japan. (Cao, Lin & Zhang, 1983: pp.292-293) In fact, similar student movements also broke out in other major cities of China such as Shanghai, Nanjing and Beijing.

The most-mentioned incident in the Old Students' Magazine was the aggression of Japan towards China. The four respondents entered the school in 1931, the year Japan invaded Manchuria and set up Manzhuguo there. The incident aroused nation-wide demonstrations, protests and strikes in which students played a leading role. After the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident, the four respondents, like many other students in the city, took part in the Anti-Japanese Campaign organized by the school. Each class was divided into small groups or teams with about six classmates and went to different parts of the city to raise funds for the soldiers. Some of them organized themselves to stage drama in the street and in different campuses criticizing the ambitions of Japan and the crime of the Japanese investors in China. Apart from these, the students of the First School had participated in a variety of anti-Japanese activities listed below:

- (1) Joining the Union of students in Guangzhou and participating in anti-Japanese and Saving-China activities.
- (2) Supporting financially the soldiers in the front through donation and all sorts of fund-raising activities.
- (3) Sending propaganda teams to the neighbouring counties to publicize anti-Japanese activities. For example, the boycott of Japanese goods.
- (4) Taking part in the demonstration in front of the provincial government, urging the government to send anti-Japanese military force to the north.
- (5) Sending student representatives to visit wounded soldiers.

The four respondents admitted that they would never forget their participation in the anti-Japanese campaign because the Manchurian Crisis broke out in their first year in school. Although they were still small at that time, they believed that the movement was important and meaningful. The principal and the

master of discipline shared with them the latest news and development of the campaign and endorsed the activities of the students. Rong still remembered that when the master of discipline announced the loss of Manchuria, all the schoolmates were weeping. It was a process of patriotic education as most of students swore to study hard to save the country. Even the teachers supported the students by integrating subject contents with nationalism. History teachers analyzed the situation in China and criticized the ambitions and encroachment of Japan while geography teachers showed the students the beauty and wealth of China. Patriotic songs were taught in music lessons so that students might sing together during assembly and demonstration. 'I remembered that King Zhu (a teacher of Chinese language) once cited the poem of Dufu, a famous poet in Tang Dynasty, to encourage us to love and defend our country. We were all deeply moved.'

In order to raise funds for the soldiers, students were organized into small teams to raised money in different parts of Guangzhou. 'We went to the most elegant and modern hotels to raise money because there was a high concentration of wealthy people. We went to each room and knock at each door to collect money. Most of the customers were generous enough to give us more money than we expected. The manager and the staff of the hotels allowed us to get into the building and get access to the visitors. It seemed that everybody understood the purpose and meaning of the campaign.'

'We went into the road to stop the cars and raised funds from the drivers because most of the drivers did afford to offer some money. We went to the shopping areas and persuaded the shopkeepers not to sell Japanese goods. One of our group members even stood on a chair and told the passers-by the ambitions of Japan and the need for the Chinese people to unify themselves. We were all imbued with strong patriotism for our motherland was in great peril.'

Fang and Qing took the advice of some people and went to Chentong to sell their flags. They heard that the people there were rich and generous they set off for that district. It was not until they returned home did they learn that Chentong was not a place for youngsters. Qing recalled, 'in my opinion, Chentong was the right place. One the one hand we could raise more money from those rich people, on the other hand, we let them know what was going on in China. It seemed that nobody there realized the grave condition faced by China.'

Fang was blamed by her mother but she felt no regret. 'It was a unique experience. I was glad because I had raised more money for my country. At the same time, I witnessed how pitiful the women were at Chentong. They had to sacrifice their bodies for money and it reminded me of the miserable fate of women in China.' Fang shared the view of Qing that some people seemed not care about what happened to China. 'At that time, I did not quite understand why some people paid so little attention to national affairs. But later, when I became more mature I no longer blamed them. This was a problem of education. At least, they had contributed their money.'

One of the methods adopted by the student to promote patriotic feeling was drama. Rong had participated in the acting out of a drama in which she played the role of a factory girl in a Japanese factory. This was a joint activity of two public schools, the First School for girls and Guangya Middle School (later, it was changed into First School for boys). 'This was one of the common themes of anti-Japanese drama. The Chinese foreman betrayed his country and people by assisting his Japanese boss to ill-treat and exploit the factory girls. Through criticizing the traitor and the ambitious Japanese, we tried to awaken the students at large. We did not have much time for rehearsal but everyone was serious and cooperative. In the

drama, the factory girls represented the bright and moral side while the boys from Guangya played the roles of bad Japanese capitalists who exploited the workers in China. It showed that females could be of great worth if they were given equal opportunity in the society.'

Nobody could escape the impact of patriotism in the 1930s as Japanese encroachment was getting more pronounced. Although the government feared that student movement would be out of control and threatened the stability of society, anti-Japanese activities were allowed as long as they were under control. In the face of foreign aggression, the students of the First School for Girls did not hesitate to participate in the anti-Japanese activities. It was a special kind of education as students' patriotism was greatly strengthened. All my respondents highlighted the participation in these activities as the most significant event in their school days and admitted that they were changed by it. They were proud of being one of the members in the movement. Through these activities, students had more understanding of the reality and more commitment to social concern. A national identity would be developed and reinforced through taking part in the patriotic movement. It must be pointed out that the teachers did contribute to the implanting the seed of patriotism to the students in normal lessons as well as the assembly.

8.6. Communist Activities

In early 1930s, Chiang Kaishek launched a series of anti-Communist campaigns so as to eradicate the influence of Communism in China. Communist activities were driven underground and persecution of suspected Communists were common in the major cities. The increasing pressure of Japanese invasion put Jiang in a dilemma because he had to face challenges from the Chinese Communists and the Japanese. Struggles between Nationalists and Communists had been

pronounced in every aspect. In order to ripe out the influence of Communism in school, Party Doctrine was to be included in the official curriculum and teachers were selected by the government. The master of discipline, who was responsible for implanting the moral and civic values to the students, was also approved by the Ministry of Education. But it was not successful to stop the infiltration of Communist activities as some of the students did join the so-called 'underground party' secretly.

'May be some of the schoolmates did join the Communist party but the number was very small. Most of the students lived a simple life and did not get involved in this complex relations.' said Rong.

'There might be some progressive schoolmates who did not agree to the policy of the government but that did not mean that they had joined the Communists. In fact, some writers had produced works commenting on the current issues and national affairs. They had exerted great influence on the youths.' Ru pointed out.

Qing had a deep personal experience about Communist activities because her sister Yin was a member of the 'Study Group' formed by Communist activists in Zhongshan University. Qing's elder brother was a policeman who learned that the police would come to arrest his sister. He told Yin to run away from home and stayed in the home of a classmate. But one of the *Mui Tsai* did not know the seriousness of the case so she told the police the address. Qing's sister was arrested and questioned. And luckily after a few days she was released and left home for the north at once. 'At first, I did not know why my elder sister had to go, but after reading her diary discovered in her room, we learned that she had joined the Communist Party.'

Rong and Ru were alarmed to see the disappearance of four classmates one year before they graduated. 'We studied and played together and there was nothing wrong about them. They might be more progressive in thought and paid more attention to politics but we did not believe they were Communist activists.' The reason for dismissing them was that Communist propaganda pamphlets were found in their school bags. According to a teacher in an interview, the principal had called a special staff meeting to discuss the issue. One of the teachers suggested that it was not appropriate to punish them severely because there was no concrete proof. For the sake of these four girls' future, it would be better to ask them to change school.

In fact, some of the teachers were open-minded enough to accept Communism. In discussing about national affairs, they encouraged the students to find out the truth about the two Parties. Some did not agree to the policy of Chiang Kaishek especially his appeasement policy towards Japanese aggression. Chinese people should be united in their effort to fight against foreign aggressors. As a public school, it must follow the government policy of advocating the Three People's Principles. However, it did not exercise tight control over teachers who might share their views with students privately. Therefore, to the teachers, the school culture was permissive rather than authoritarian.

8.7. Social Environment

According to the theory of symbolic interactionism, people live in the social world in which they interact with others and derive meanings from these interactions. The process of these interactions takes place in a social context.

(Woods, 1979: p. 16) In this section, the views of the respondents towards other social agents in the School are examined. These agents include the principals, the teachers as well as the classmates.

8.7.1. The Principals

Within a brief history of ten to eleven years (1928-38) of the First School for girls, there were five principals. Lu Lanfang enjoyed the prestige as one of the founding members of the school and her contribution during the initial stage of the school was great. Lu was born in a poor family in Guangzhou. She was greatly influenced by her grandfather who was a *xiuca*i of the Qing dynasty. He supported a returned student from Japan and had cast his support to the reform movement. When Lu was a young girl, she had showed discontent with the backwardness of the country and criticized foot-binding and the control of Confucianism on women. Lu insisted on studying in modern school and learning western knowledge and was determined to contribute in the field of education. When she was twenty six years old, she was appointed the principal of Guangdong Normal School for girls. Three years later, she became the first principal of the First School for girls. But unfortunately she was later forced to leave the post as a result of serious illness.

The second principal was Ye Suzhi who headed up the school for one year. Within this period, Ye recruited some of the best teachers for the school and established an administrative structure for the school. Ye also tried to enrich the school experience of the students by emphasizing extra-curricular activities. Due to the change of personnel in the Ministry of Education, Ye resigned in 1931. However, the first two principals stayed in school long enough to exert any substantial influence on the school. When the respondents joined the school in 1931, it was during the term of Lin Baoquan, the third principal.

Lin had an extraordinary career in the field of education. After studying in a few years in the Beijing Girls' School, Lin was selected and sent by the government to study in France in 1921. Lin entered the University of Paris and majored in educational theories and educational psychology. Lin returned to China in 1926 and one year later she was invited to lecture on education and psychology in Jinan University. 1932, Lin was appointed the principal of the First School for Girls in Guangzhou to replace Ye.

Lin played an important part in the expansion of the school. It was during her term that the new campus was planned and materialized. Lin also procured funds for the purchase of equipment and facilities. She also strengthened the teaching force by recruiting outstanding and learned teachers for the school. There was also a balanced development in academic work and extra-curricular activities. In 1936, Lin resigned and was replaced by Li who stayed in the school for one year only.

Although the contact between Lin and the students was not as frequent and intimate as the teachers, they never forgot her teachings through morning assemblies and weekly assemblies. They remembered that Lin always reminded the students to 'study diligently so that they could bring glory to the country and honour to women'. Lin also taught the girls to 'cultivate a strong character with wisdom, responsibility and morality.' Rong was deeply impressed by Lin's wide knowledge of the world as Lin commented on the current and international affairs during the assemblies. Ru agreed with Lin's idea that the girls should treasure the opportunity to receive education and be a useful person in the society. Lin always stressed the importance of knowledge to the emancipation and independence of

women and the equality of both sexes. Ru thought that she might be influenced by these teachings so after all these years she still bore these ideas in mind.

Qing and Fang had a sensational understanding of Lin. Qing admired the appearance and personality of the principal. 'She was quiet but graceful, always presented herself in a polite manner. She led a simple life and it could be seen from clothes she wore. She set a good example for the schoolmates and there was an atmosphere of simplicity in our school.' Qing pointed out. On the other hand, Fang was attracted by Lin's wide range of knowledge. 'It seemed that she knew everything and I liked the manner she spoke and her graceful gesture. You could also learn a lot of things from her, especially those you could not learn from books.'

The fourth principal was Li Cuifang and the last was Teng Bunu. Lin had to leave Guangzhou because her husband who was a professor of art had accepted a new post in northern China. Li was appointed but after one year she was replaced by Teng, a lawyer and the wife of the Guomindang general in Guangdong who was in charge of resisting the Japanese invasion later. The respondents did not have a deep impression of Li as she stayed in the school for one year only. But Rong remembered that she was a quiet person.

Teng, the last principal, was an advocate of women rights. Both Ru and Rong were impressed by her name *bunu* which means 'not being a slave'. Ru thought that the name had something to do with Teng's determination to fight for women's rights while Rong was inspired by the name that a woman should not be bound by traditional thought and must not depend on males. Teng shared with the students the importance of patriotism in the face of foreign aggression and encouraged them to actualize themselves through serving the country and other

people. 'At first, I didn't like her name, but after I learned the meaning I gradually accepted it.' Rong said. Ru also reflected, 'it was unusual for a woman to have such a personal name because a name was considered a wish or an expectation of a person.'

The five principals represented earlier generation of educated women who had received western education in either modern schools in China or schools in the West. In fact, the western-trained intellectuals had occupied the administrative posts in 1930 China, especially in higher education (Wang, 1966: p377). Their achievements and social status reminded the girls in the First School of the importance of education. It also made them treasure the opportunity to become more enlightened through acquisition of knowledge. With education and knowledge women would be able to serve the community and gain a greater degree of autonomy.

In the First School For Girls, the principals took up the administrative work and shared with students in mass meetings. Not every student was able to have frequent contacts with them. Qing and Fang only gave a description of their appearance and their sharing rather than a deeper understanding of them. The opportunity was limited to student representatives and students with outstanding achievements in both academic work and sports. Therefore, only through mass meetings did they exert direct influence on students. However, they were important in striking a balance between the requirements of the government and the needs of the students and providing a relatively open environment for both the teachers and students.

Of the five principals, Lin Baoquan was most remembered by the students because her term was the longest. She had enough time to put her ideals into effect

and leave a deeper impression in student's minds. Of course, Lin was the one responsible for the moving the school to a new and better site help increase her popularity among the students.

8.7.2. The Teachers

The memory of their teachers constitutes a major part, and perhaps the most important part, of the Old Students' Magazines. The students have produced massive account of words and deed of their teachers in each issue. Everything about the teachers was described or written in depth, including their teachings, strengths, teaching methods, characters and appearance, their relationships with students so and so forth. Through these descriptions, a deep appreciation and respect towards the teachers were clearly displayed. The following will be an introduction to some of the most popular teachers of the school.

The most popular among them was a teacher of Chinese language named Zhu Xiuren. His name was the most mentioned in the Old Students' Magazines. Sometimes Zhu also taught history in senior forms because he had studied abroad when he was young. He also travelled widely in the United States and Europe so he was regarded as the most knowledgeable teacher in the school. His younger sister was a student in the school who is now the secretary of the Old Students' Association. Zhu was a learned man who was had good foundation of Classical learning and western training. Therefore, Zhu symbolized a perfect combination of both Chinese and western cultures in the eyes of the graduates. Apart from these, Zhu was remembered for his lively and stimulating lectures in the classroom. The students also appreciated his calligraphy very much and regarded his writings on the blackboard as art work. With a sense of humour and eloquent speech, Zhu

attracted most students during lessons. He was widely known as 'King Zhu', a nickname given by his students to show their respect to him.

Ru admitted that Zhu was the teacher she respected most for he had shown her the beauty of language and literature. 'In junior forms, I liked science subjects, especially physics. But after I met Zhu, I fell in love with Chinese language and literature as a result of Zhu's inspiration and encouragement.' Ru recalled, 'Zhu always integrated contents with real life experiences and examples so that the contents appealed to our feeling. Zhu also encouraged us to express our ideas and feeling through writing diaries. I found it very useful because on the one hand, I could improve the writing style while on the other hand, I was free to put my thought on papers.' Ru decided to become a field reporter because she intended to expose the evil behaviour of the Japanese troops and the pity of the Chinese people through writings. Ru admitted that the decision was made under the influence of 'King Zhu'.

'He often encouraged us to read extensively because books were another important source of ideas and knowledge. You could not take a teacher with you whenever you went but books were good companions. Zhu was always so convincing when he wanted you to do something.' Rong said. From time to time, Zhu would prepare a list of books including novels, plays, modern poems as well as translated works and asked the students to write book reviews. 'He helped us to develop a good reading habit and widen our horizon through reading.' Rong added.

Qing admired Zhu very much although he had not taught her in the classroom. But Qing's sister, Yin, was one of his best students in the school. Zhu was responsible for training her sister in the anti-Japanese speech-making competition in Guangzhou and Yin finally won the champion for the school. Qing

remembered what Zhu said in an assembly, 'To save our country, we should improve our personal qualities and prepare for being used in the society..... Learning seriously and diligently was the best means to prepare ourselves for the country.' Qing thought that Zhu was right by pointing out the importance of education.

The method Zhu adopted to teach history was considered interesting by his students. Fang said, 'He always asked us to say the names of historical figures and important places in English. For example, Napoleon and Constantinople.' Zhu pointed out the Chinese translations were sometimes clumsy and difficult to write. Fang loved listening to the stories about history told by Zhu during lessons. 'He had travelled widely in the West so he could describe the things he saw and met from a personal point of view. It seemed that he was a tourist guide who introduced the tradition and culture of a place. He always showed us some pictures he had taken and collected during his stay in the West in which we could see the western architecture such as cathedrals, monumental buildings as well as palaces.'

'History was not just words on papers and names of people and places to remember, it was something we could see with our eyes.' Fang continued. 'He also used maps to show the geographical positions of the European countries and put history into stories which could stimulate our interest and imagination.'

Both Ru and Qing remembered clearly how Tan, a teacher of geography, taught them to master the subject. 'First of all, he would draw a map on the blackboard and write down the distinctive feature of the place such as mountains, rivers and famous cities. Then he explained the communication systems and introduced the main economic activities of the place. Then he went on pointing out the climate and so on. Sometimes, he would add a description of the tradition and

people there so that we could have a vivid and complete picture of the place. It was interesting to learn in this way and it was easy to link all the things up.’ They liked their teacher to present subject matter to them in a step-by-step manner and furnish it with real experiences. I benefited from his method of teaching so much when I became a teacher after the War.’ Ru reflected.

Ru deeply appreciated the way Tan drew maps on the blackboard. ‘It seemed that he had put everything in the mind. He could produce accurate maps and beautiful diagrams on the blackboard at his own will and whenever necessary. He did not need to look at the books and everything was all right. He was so knowledgeable that he could answer any questions raised by us. It was enjoyable to attend geography lessons.’ After Ru became a teacher, she followed the method of Tan to teach students geographical knowledge and it worked perfectly every time.’

Qing had similar experience. ‘In fact, geography was not my favourite subject, I liked mathematics most. But Tan’s lecture was lively and interesting and his map drawing was really good. He was especially good at drawing maps of China and Guangdong. When drawing the map of China, he would start with the coastline and then outline the sketch of the country. Then, he put down the “three great rivers, the industrial area in northeast, the desert area in northwest, the high mountains or plateau in southwest and the productive Sichuan basin, the prosperous delta areas of the rivers. It was impossible to forget. Tan also taught us to love our country which was rich in its beauty and natural resources. He hated the Japanese and western control of our country and blamed them for exploiting China. He always told us the importance of economic development and reminded us to work for the growth of the country in the future. It was more than a geography lesson, it was a kind of nationalistic and moral education.’ Qing reflected, ‘The geographical knowledge about Guangdong was very useful to me during the War of Resistance

because I had to lead groups of children refugee to move to places of safety occasionally. This was something I never thought of when I was a student.'

Rong was interested in music and singing and, according to her, it was the result of the work of Wang, her music teacher. Wang studied music in Hollywood, the United States and was specialized in singing. 'She was one of the few westernized teachers in the school. Wang used choral singing to instill with us a sense of mutual support and responsibility. But at the same time, she insisted that we must sing individually to build up personal confidence. She had a special way of testing the students. While playing the piano with her right hand; she put her left hand on our abdomens to make sure we were breathing in the right way. We also treated her as our second English teacher because she always taught us to pronounce the lyrics correctly and explained the meaning of the words. You must first understand the meaning of the song if you wanted to sing it well.' Before Wang died in 1985, a group of graduates visited her and sang the songs in the 101 song album at her bed. 'We will never forget the happy days with our teacher. Our teacher will go but the music she gave us will always be with us.' said Rong. 'We thank our mother school for inviting such a good teacher to share with us the beauty of music although music was seen as a subject of secondary importance at that time.'

The First School for girls was renowned for its sports and physical education was emphasized by the school. Besides teachers, part-time physical education teachers specialized in different sports were invited to teach the girls. They were usually students from Zhongshan University who were good at sports. Their presence not only helped the girls to obtain excellent results in various contests but also inspired them to further study in the universities by sharing with them the college life. 'They told us that college life was free and challenging and more

specialized knowledge could be acquired. Life was also gorgeous in the college where one might participate into a variety of activities. Many of us hoped that we could enter the colleges one day. It was not easy as the number of female students was still small as compared with male students.’ Rong recalled.

In 1930, comprehensive curriculum was adopted in middle education. Student needed to study both art subjects and science subjects at the same time. Besides mathematics, physics, chemistry, zoology and botany were introduced. The respondents remembered that they needed to do experiments in the laboratories. Ru said, ‘It was a fresh and excited moments when teacher asked me to dissect a frog and it was equally interesting to make soap in the laboratory. Looking through the microscope let me discover another world, the world of microcosm. The opportunity to get into contact with knowledge was beyond the imagination of the females in the past.’

During the administration of Chen Jitang, students were required to study Chinese Classics. Among the four respondents, only Ru thought it was useful and meaningful. ‘I liked Chinese culture and literature, to understand more about the essence our culture helped me study Chinese language and literature. In fact, “some of the teachings and ideas in the Classics are stimulating and inspiring. For example, the idea of filial piety is the bond of families which teach us to love and respect the old people. The feeling of the people in the Book of Odes was simple and true which should be valued.’ But Ru did not like the teaching method of her teacher. ‘He just asked us to read aloud together without really explaining the meaning of the text. And then he asked to learn it by heart. The only assessment was dictation so most of the classmates were tired of it.’

Qing simply pointed out Classics lessons were nightmares. 'Our teacher was an old man of over sixty who changed the classroom into his sishu. It seemed that he did not care if we understood the text or not and the time was spent on reciting and dictation. We did not feel the need to study it.' Rong shared Qing's view. 'Our teacher wore a pair of spectacles and the glasses were very thick. He seldom paid attention to what we did. Some of the students looked at the textbook secretly for answers during dictations. He did not say anything even though he knew it.' Fang took a more neutral stance. 'Maybe the Chinese Classics are really worth studying but the way it was taught could hardly be appreciated.'

Outside the classroom, the contact between teachers and the students was mainly through extra-curricular activities. Since most of the teachers did not need to stay in the school after they had finished their lessons so if students wanted to talk with any teacher, they needed to arrange a time before hand. Class teachers were required to keep in close contact with their students to see if they had any problems, so relations between class teachers and their students were much more intimate. Some teachers played a more important part in the school because they were in charge of administrative work such as masters of academic work and discipline. They were required to spend more time in the school.

'My class teacher was a kind-hearted and warm who liked to talk with us after classes. We always visited his house after school which was two streets from my home. There we did our homework and played with his children. He appointed me as one of his helpers to decorate the boards for exhibition. We worked until eight o'clock and he sent us back home one by one. We treated him not as a teacher but also a good friend.'

The other three respondents agreed that there was a social distance between teachers and students. 'We treated them as our fathers and mothers and they regarded as their children and generally speaking we learned to show respect and obedience to them.'

Qing pointed out that the classmates liked those teachers who would take initiative to talk to them and told them interesting things outside the books. For example, a teacher taught them the table manners if they dined in a western restaurant. 'The Western people use knives, forks and spoons to dine instead of chopsticks, and it is important for you to know when to use what.' Qing felt that cultural differences could be a source of new knowledge. Another teacher once shared with them his life as an overseas student in the USA which widened their horizon. 'America is a country of great wealth and progress and the people are full of energy. Most of the children attend schools including the girls. Besides white people, there are also black people who are poor.....' Qing said, 'the only way to gain an impression of the Americans was from the movies so we were attentive to what the teacher said.'

The perception of the students towards their teachers was determined by the following criteria. Most of them were knowledgeable and displayed expertise in their subjects. This explained why they were so popular. Their inspiring teaching left a deep impression in students' minds e.g. the music teacher. They were the sources of knowledge and skills and able to satisfy the needs of students who were thirsty for knowledge. The teachers were capable of presenting knowledge through good teaching methods and showing them the ways to acquire knowledge themselves, e.g. the geography and the Chinese teachers. They did not accept the Chinese Classics only because the method used was too traditional. In fact, there was a long tradition in China to pay respect to teachers who not only passed on

knowledge and skills but also provided moral guidance to students. With the passing of time, when the age difference was getting narrower, a life-long friendship was developed between teachers and students.

The teachers acted as a channel for the students to understand the society and the world. The girls learned more about their possible career through the physical education teachers and some of them might set clearer goals for themselves. The instillation of patriotic thought and sentiments through subject contents helped students to grasp the social and political realities of the time. They not only paid attention to the cognitive needs of the students, but also the affective domain by being willing to develop close relationships with students. In short, the students were motivated to learn, cared and enlightened by a team of experienced and well-qualified teachers.

8.7.3. The Classmates

Ru was comparatively quiet and liked to spend more time on reading. But after school, she would like to play ball games with classmates. Ru played all sort of games including badminton, basketball, table tennis and baseball. Ru said that she was not good at sports but being with classmates had a sense of group identity. 'To take part in their activities was the best means to gain friendship. I felt good when I played with my friends in school. As a matter of fact, we also studied and did homework together and helped one another in time of troubles.' Ru continued, 'It was wonderful to have friends who shared common interests. We formed a small group in which we wrote to one another and shared our books.'

During Fang's time in the school, Po was her best friend. Both of them were fond of reading serial novels and long novels. After school they would go to the

bookshop near the school where they could find serial novels at discount prices. They could purchase a novel with ten cents and reading occupied most of their leisure time. They purchased different titles of novels and exchanged with each other after finishing reading their own. By so doing, they could save more money to purchase other books.

‘It was pleasant to have a reading partner. Besides being able to read as many novels as we could, the hobby helped us to build a friendship which lasted for the whole life. We did everything together and treated each other as sister. Even though I had to leave the school later, Po was still my best friend.’ Fang pointed out that reading had opened a new world to her as she could learn many things from the books. She would like to choose novels about heroine and outstanding women to read. For example, Hua Mulan and Wu Zetian, the woman emperor in Tang Dynasty. Fang admired their courage to challenge the tradition. She also learned that women were not weaker than the men and so they should not be forced to play an inferior role. Reading translated novels let her know more about the people in other places. The works by the writers of the May Fourth Era and the 1930s were also her favourites.

All the respondents pointed out the time after school was a time of self-organized activities. Some had ball games. Some stayed in the library. Some wealthy schoolmates even went to western restaurants to have after tea and watch movies in the cinemas. Qing loved playing ball games and watching movies and she remembered her life after school as ‘the most relaxing and wonderful time in a day. We spent part of the lunchtime doing some homework and left the rest for the night. We would like to do things we liked after school. You would find our schoolmates in the basketball court, library, bookshops, restaurants, parks and

cinemas. During summertime, we liked to go swimming by the Pearl River or row the boats in the park. In a word, we were more fortunate than the girls in the past.'

'Watching movies was one of my hobbies. There were no spoken dialogues in the movies at that time but there were background music and written dialogues. All the motion pictures were in black and white but it was already very attractive to me. Usually I went with some of my classmates because thereafter we could discuss about it. I liked watching western movies, especially those from the US because I loved the dressing of western women.' Qing recalled.

There were some factors explained why the girls developed close peer relationship. Generally speaking, they belonged to the same social classes which shared similar family background and life-style. They were also the privileged minority of girls who could get access to an education and had similar path of future career. They were also reminded that they were educated and prepared for taking up more important duties in the society via various channels, e.g. assembly, school song and teachers' expectation. But the most important of all was that they belonged to the first public girls' school in Guangzhou. They tended to compare themselves and their schools with students from other private mission girls' schools and this unique position helped promote a group identity among them. This peer relationship was later strengthened by the social and political upheavals and was condensed into mutual help and support and a life-long sisterhood.

The reconstruction of schooling process above demonstrated the many facets of school life which taken together had produced far-reaching consequences for my respondents. How they were influenced by this process and what benefits they gained from it. They will be answered in the last chapter.

Notes:

[1] The lyrics of the national song is as follow:

San min Chu I,
Our Party's aim,
To rebuild the Republic
And establish Universal Brotherhood [*Ta Tung*]

Press on comrades,
Vanguard of the people!
Cease not your vigil,
But ever follow the Principles!

Be diligent, be brave,
Be true, be loyal,
With one heart, one mind,
Carry through to the end.

Source: (Peakes, p.136)

[2] Lessons on "Party Principles" were conducted for two hours per week. It consisted entirely of Sun Yat-sen's teachings on the Three People's Principles, his instructions on the "'outline" (*dagang*) and "general plan" (*fanglue*) of national reconstruction, and his ideas on the division of constitutional power among the five *Yuan* (i.e. legislative, judiciary, executive, supervisory, and examination councils) (Huang, 1996: p.87).

[3] Dufu's poem quoted by the Chinese teacher:

「國破山河在，城春草木深；感時花濺淚，恨別鳥驚心。烽火連三月，家書抵萬金，白頭搔更短，渾欲不勝簪。」 杜甫

[4] The original Chinese Lyrics of the School Song and its Chinese translation:

校歌

「我青年我青年，我女青年。白日青天滿地紅懸我前，
男女平等，放大光明燈，我試思我生何為？
對家，對國，對社會，有德性，又有才慧，但有猛進莫卻退，
惟教育是幸福，身心智德發達齊速，我校先趨正鵠，
我師導我，導我趨正鵠。」
女中校友會創立後，「白日青天滿地紅懸我前」改為「勇毅勤奮反帝反封建」

Original Lyrics of the School Song (*Today's lyrics in italics*)

‘We, young women, brave, diligent and
With national flag hoisted before us. (*anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism*)
Men and women are equal
We shine our way through
We try to ponder why we were born
It is for the family, the society and the nation
That we were born.
As talented and virtuous,
We are enterprising and we never retreat.
Education is the only means to bring blessings and
Facilitate our all-round development
Our school shows us the way and

Our teachers guide us through.'

CHAPTER NINE: THE OUTCOMES OF SCHOOLING

The previous two chapters reconstruct the school history and the schooling processes of the respondents and the things they obtained from their middle education in their own perspectives. In this chapter, the ways they used their knowledge will be examined through their participation in their work and families. The chapter will be divided into two parts. The first focuses upon their respective activities during the first twelve years after their graduation from the middle schools. The second part covers their lives after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October, 1949. The focus will be on whether the education they received benefited them in a new political environment.

9.1. Life As Teachers During an Era of Social and Political Upheavals

9.1.1. The Impact of Wars

After the Nationalist government's declaration of war on Japan in July 1937, there was news that Guangzhou would be a target of bombing. The First School began its new term in September 1937 but the number of students decreased drastically. Similar conditions took place in other schools and most of the parents simply did not allow their children to attend school in case of emergency. Before the coming of Japanese troops in October 1938, most of the schools had been moved to the neighbouring areas including Hong Kong and Macao (Liang, pp.271-272).

Rong was studying Chinese language in the University of Guangzhou when the Japanese troops occupied the city. She managed to finish the second year but

was forced to leave the city in 1939. Rong went to northern Guangdong with her family to avoid any accident and finally they settled in Shaoquan, the wartime capital city of Guangdong. Her dream of being a college student was not fulfilled. 'To be a college student was my dream but it was shattered by the Japanese. But in those days, staying alive was more important than anything and people were running away from possible dangers. I felt that the Chinese fellow countrymen were pitiful and helpless in the face of enemies. We must unify ourselves to save the country.'

Similar things happened to Qing who taught for a short time after graduation in 1937. The dangerous condition in Guangzhou forced Qing and her family to set for Shaoquan where she continued the teaching works in the Home for children refugees (HCR). 'As the number of students in Guangzhou became less and less and life was endangered everyday, we decided to leave our home for the time being. It was sad to leave some of my students and friends but I knew this would happen sooner or later.'

Fang went to Hong Kong with one of her teachers who introduced her to teach in a primary school. But unfortunately, the school closed as a result of financial problems. Fang then moved to Macao where she took part in teaching and supplementary work in the Nationalist army. 'It was not an easy task to serve in the army and life was really hard. I stayed because I found the job meaningful.'

Rong wanted to apply for the Zhongshan University in 1937 but like Ru her dream to be a college student could no longer be fulfilled. 'I was very disappointed because the opportunity to further study was gone. I had confidence to be successful in the entrance examination but the War had taken away my chance. I was very upset with it.'

9. 1.2. The Search for a Meaningful Life

‘I intended to be a field reporter because I could use my pen to expose the misery of my fellow countrymen and the evil deeds of the Japanese. I felt competent to write as I did in the days as a student and this was the most meaningful task I thought of at that time. My mother feared that I would get hurt or even killed in the battlefields so she did not agree to my decision. However, at my insistence, my mother finally let me choose my way.’ But Ru changed her mind when she met a small boy in an operation.

‘Our soldiers had to carry out two tasks at the same time when they were out in the battlefields: to resist the advancement of Japanese troops and to save any people they came across in the battlefields, especially the children. During an operation, we saved a crying boy by the roadside. He told us that the Japanese had killed his parents. They threw his younger brother up into the air and stabbed him with sharp knives. We brought him back home only to discover that his grandmother had already died probably of hunger. When I looked at the face of the small boy, I could not help crying myself. It was not easy to accept what I had learned and seen. I suddenly came to the conclusion that China’s future laid in that boy who had just become an orphan. There were too many kids who had lost their parents like the boy we saved. They represented our future and needed the care and teaching of some people so that they could become contributing members of the society. They needed teachers more than field reporters. In the end, I decided to give up the job as a field reporter and applied for a teaching post in the Home for children refugees. This decision changed my life and career.’

Qing was trained to be a teacher but in the first year after the fall of Guangzhou, she went to work as a cashier at her elder sister's café in Hong Kong. After a short period of time, Qing quitted the job. 'I did not like the job. I just sat by the counter and collected money from customers. It was meaningless to me so I decided not to stay in Hong Kong. On the one hand, I did not want to rely on my elder sister and her husband, on the other, I really want to do something more meaningful when the country was facing difficulties.' At that time, the Nationalist government organized a group of intellectuals in Hong Kong to return to Mainland China to serve as teachers. Qing joined the group and bid farewell to her sister. 'I was told that the salary would be unstable and food was shared among the groups. I took part in it not only because I would have a chance to put what I learned into practice but also because of the influence of my second sister who went to Yanan to join the Communists. She had been determined to work for the betterment of the country when she was a student at the middle school. I would like to follow her example.'

Fang also headed for Hong Kong after Guangzhou was taken by the Japanese. She was introduced to teach in a private primary school in the colony by one of her teachers. But unfortunately, the school closed as a result of financial shortage. 'At that time, I wanted to go home because I had no friends there. Moreover, it was not easy to find a suitable job in Hong Kong. My teacher then introduced me to work as a clerk in the Jinan University and I enjoyed the advantage of earning a living on one hand and studied at the University as a part-time student on the other.' But due to the attack of Japanese troops, the University had to move to a neighbouring county. Fang could not go with her colleagues for her mother and younger brother were sick at that time. Consequently, Qing was recruited by a division of the Nationalist army to be responsible for propaganda work and training soldiers. 'I found the task challenging and I finished every task

to the best of my ability. I felt a sense of importance for I could educate both the people and the soldiers. It was alarmed to find that most of the young soldiers were illiterate so they had difficulty in reading instructions and writing letters to their parents and relatives.’ Fang continued to point out, ‘although I was a girl, the young soldiers respected me as their teacher.’

After two years of alternate stay in Hong Kong and Macao, Rong returned to Guangzhou where she needed to take care of her mother. ‘I worked in the factory in Shamshuipo and the oyster field in Tuen Mun in the British colony with my best friend but it was not what I wanted. I, therefore, returned to Guangzhou but failed to find a suitable job. In the end, I worked as a clerk in the Bank of China which was controlled by the Japanese. When I was small, I did not want to be a ‘vase’ [1] in the government department or private firm but then I had no choice. After my elder sister got married, she and my brother-in-law moved to Hong Kong. I became one of the breadwinners in the family.’ After about two years, Rong succeeded to find a teaching post in a primary school and that was the first time she experienced the life as a teacher.

9.1. 3. The Meaning of Education

The War of Resistance provided a unique environment to the respondents in which they had to reflect on the meaning of education and meet the special challenges with their knowledge. Their interpretation of the meaning of education might not be the same as before as a result of the changing reality during the War.

‘The reason why I gave up the ideal to be a field reporter and became a teacher was that I wanted to save the younger generation of my country so that they could take revenge on the Japanese. I could not stand the brutal act of the Japanese

soldiers who behaved like wild animals. I witnessed the miserable fate of many orphans who were simple and innocent so I must protect them from possible dangers. Moreover, I intended to teach them knowledge and skills so that they were able to develop themselves even in times of war. As a teacher, I could be with them always and stand by their side whenever they needed me. It was the best to commit yourselves to cultivate the lives of children who treated you not only as a teacher but also as a sister or even a mother. This was also the first time I realized the greatness and influence of being a teacher.' Ru reflected.

Sharing the same opinion, Qing recalled the reason why she taught in the Home for the children refugees. 'Ru and I belonged to the same organization but we worked in different places. I was trained to be a teacher but I never thought that I would teach in this particular way. After graduation, I hoped to find a teaching post in a well-established school. But during the War, I taught in temples, simple houses and open areas. I had to teach students of different ages and of both sexes. It was a challenge to me for I had never done something like this before. Although it was difficult to me at the beginning, I found the work there meaningful and contented. I began to recognize my value and importance. Without teachers, the children would waste their time there but now we could open up a new educational environment for the children. We did every thing together. We learned, lived and played together just like a big family. I required myself to set a good example for them and did everything positively. To me, it was also a kind of self-education and elevation.'

After being recruited by a division of the Nationalist army, Qing was given the duties of teaching the young soldiers in the army and organizing propaganda work. Qing worked with a group of teachers and she was responsible for teaching them language. Since some of the soldiers were recruited from the rural areas, they

received very little or no formal education. They had difficulty to read and write and this might jeopardize any operation. 'I had never thought that so many young people were uneducated in my country. As a girl who had studied in school and received all sorts of knowledge, I was more fortunate than most of them. I realized the importance of teaching them language so as to facilitate better communication and my task was critical in any operation.'

'I also shared with other colleagues the propaganda work. It was a kind of mass education in which we had to publicize the importance of the fighting against our enemies and mobilize the support of the Chinese people. In sharing my knowledge with the people at large, I deeply realized that I belonged to the privileged few in China who had a chance to complete schooling. The understanding made me more determined to be a teacher in the future to educate more young people.'

Rong had a different experience with the above three respondents during this period. Originally, she had no intention of taking part in the teaching profession. What she wanted was to become a college student and acquire a more specialized education. The War had shattered her dream as she was unable to sit for the entrance examination because she got a fever. Rong went to Hong Kong and Macao and worked in factories as a worker and firms as a clerk but she felt that all these were against her wish. She did not think of being a teacher because it was not her original decision.

'I received a letter from my mother urging me to go back to Guangzhou. She told me that she wanted me to return to Guangzhou to live with her. In fact, I longed to go back as I could not find any satisfaction in Hong Kong and Macao. In Guangzhou, I worked in the Bank of China as a clerk but the feeling of being a

‘vase’ was growing. I had to face papers and documents which were ‘dead things’ so later I joined a primary school to be a teacher until I got married a few years later. It was happy to teach because I could share with my students what I learned and knew. It was a process of self-actualization in which I put the things in my mind into practice. There was a strong sense of satisfaction which I could not find in previous jobs.’

The outbreak of the War of Resistance brought the dream of further education to a halt, as all the respondents were unable to continue with their formal schooling. It was also the outbreak of the War that pressed them to redefine the meaning of education. Ru saw education as a way to take revenge as she prepared students for China’s future. She shared with Qing that education was the life with children refugees. It was more than a curriculum or a subject. It was love and care. Qing needed to teach different standards and ages of children. It was something like Confucius’ saying: ‘Teach disregard of students’ social origins and abilities’. Qing had undergone a process of self-discovery and self-education through teaching as well as facing difficulties.

On the other hand, Fang equipped the soldiers with a ‘weapon’ – literacy. It seemed that she was fighting the war against the enemies with education. She was told that illiteracy would jeopardize any operation and so education was to play a decisive role in the battles. Together with Qing and Ru, they combined education with patriotism. Rong worked first in a factory, then in a bank, and finally in a primary school. The experiences she gained enabled her to have comparison. After that she rediscovered the meaning of education as a process of self-actualization.

Each of them redefined the meaning of education in their own perspective and context, and acquired satisfaction and recognition from their services. The War

had put them in a particular time and space, but it was the knowledge, skills and values they received from their schooling made it possible. The War also exposed them to the reality which was beyond their understanding before. Their commitment to teaching was a consequence of this understanding of reality as they recognized the needs of others. Moreover, their views on the value of education also changed with the application of their knowledge.

9. 1.4. Application of Knowledge

In this section, the teaching work of the respondents will be introduced. Qing and Ru taught in the Home for the children refugees (HCR) in northern Guangdong. Qing served as a teacher and propagandist in the army and Rong, after several years of indecision, became a primary teacher in Guangzhou which was still under Japanese rule. In order to see what education or schooling conferred upon them, their teaching work in respective organizations will be examined.

The Home for the children refugees was set up to take care and provide basic schooling for the orphans and children of the soldiers. A special team in the army was organized to search for children refugees in the war fronts and sent them to the Home. The children were then arranged into different classes according to the age and sometimes educational level. They were taught the basic knowledge of language, mathematics, writing and reading and some life skills such as farming and gardening. The routine life was learning, working and physical training. Due to the shortage of food and resources, their life in the Home was hard, simple and disciplined. The children had to tidy up their own beds after they got up in the morning. Then they lined up in the open field and listened to the teachings of the teachers. Orders would be given to them by blowing whistle and they had to act like soldiers. Everything had to be carried out in order. For example, eating, doing

exercise, working, and even playing. It was hoped that the children could learn how to take care of themselves and others (older boys and girls were required to do so) as early as possible (Wu, 1984).

Ru was a language teacher in the HCR and the class teacher of a group of boys. 'I was in name a language teacher but in effect I needed to teach them everything. At first I did not have any teaching experience so I adopted the methods of my teachers at the middle school. I did admit that sometimes I used the examples raised by my previous teachers to teach them. Later, I developed my own style by integrating all the methods I learned. In fact, there were other teachers in the HCR who were experienced teachers and graduates from normal schools. We shared ideas and materials with one another to enrich our lessons. Teaching was a way to enrich yourself through learning from others and solving the problems before hand.'

'I told my students the importance of language because it was an instrument to all knowledge. I told them the aesthetical aspect of language through Tang and Sung poems and they liked it very much. They were taught to recite the poems in groups to promote a group spirit. I was glad to share with them the poems I loved. They displayed a serious attitude in learning language and showed great progress with the passing of time. One of the most unforgettable incidents was that I once recommended half of my primary five students who had great progress in language to sit for the public examination, seventeen of them succeeded in entering middle schools in the city. I was satisfied with their results and I was happy that my teaching methods did work. This was the best gift they sent to me and I felt the power of education through their success.'

‘Besides these, I taught them to grow some vegetables, tomatoes and cucumbers so that they could have more varieties of food. We also reared chickens to have more meat and eggs which were very difficult to get during wartime. Sometimes, I spent my money to buy some meat for them because the supply of food was not steady.’

‘There were times when the HCR was endangered by the bombing of Japanese fighters and therefore we needed to move to another site. Usually it would take us a few days to complete the journey and we kept on walking for about ten hours every day with sporadic breaks for rest and meals.. I had to take care of my children on the way to the destination. We camped in sheltered areas to avoid possible attacks from the enemies and the knowledge I obtained from scouting activities and nursing and military training helped me a lot. At night, I showed them the bright stars in the dark and told them my experience in the scouting activities.’

‘I treated my students as my younger brothers and sisters and always wanted to protect them from any danger. I was afraid of darkness but I would go into their rooms (in the temple) late at night to see whether they had covered themselves with blankets. During daytime, we played ball games together and other games which I had played with my classmates in my mother school. This was the only entertainment we had in HCR’

‘I deeply felt that I was a lucky girl who had received education and was thus able to enlighten them with what I learned. Two years later, I was assigned to give the students moral and civic education every Monday and in charge of administrative work. My contribution to the HCR was gradually recognized by my superiors who trusted in me and appreciated my ability. But the greatest

satisfaction came from my own students who had developed good character and laid down a foundation when they graduated. Today we are all getting old but some of them still call me aunt Ru as they come to visit me. I also receive letters and photographs from my boys who were already over sixty from Taiwan and oversea. For me, the work in the HCR was a meaningful and sacred mission, so I worked in the HCR nearly until the end of the war.

Qing worked in the HCR mainly as a mathematics teacher but sometimes she needed to teach the students other things such as language and writing. Qing was an active young lady so she liked playing and singing with the students in leisure time. 'I taught them to sing the songs I learned during my school days and the anti-Japanese songs. This was one of the ways for me to comfort my students when they were unhappy and stimulate the morale of them. I also taught them some knowledge of history and geography by telling them stories and showing them how to read maps. Since some of them came from peasant families, I told them the life in the city with pictures I drew on the blackboard. I did this as a kind of reward as they needed to finish their work well before story time. In order to instill a sense of duty in them, I appointed helpers to help me during lessons. In a word, I tried different methods to attract their attention. I must say that the knowledge I learned in the normal school was useful, especially educational psychology.'

'It was not easy to teach them mathematics for the disparity among the students was great in the level of education. I often used concrete examples to arouse their interest in the subject. For example, I used spiders to teach multiplication in this way: a spider had eight legs, how many legs were there if we had eleven spiders. The next time I would use insects such as grasshoppers or beetles as examples. The small students liked this method especially. In effect, this

method was not invented by me. It was inspired by my mathematics teacher at the First School for girls who used *mah jong* to teach us division.'

'One of the most unforgettable moments in the HCR was the making of sandals with dry grasses. Everything was in shortage during wartime. Food, books, clothes, soaps, toys and shoes were not enough. We need to make something out of nothing. In order to make more shoes for future use, we had to teach the students to make shoes with grasses. I turned it into a competition among them and the best would be awarded some food. I also turned it into a writing exercise in which they needed to describe the process of production and the feeling in their own words. They all loved the idea.'

Most of my students were orphans who sometimes displayed emotional depression. They would cry in secret and most of them were girls. I tried to organize some extra-curricular activities for them so as to release their unpleasant feelings. I arranged dramas for them and a sharing group for some girls. In the group, I shared with them my life as a student and something about my teachers and friends. I also encouraged them to share their wishes with one another. Most of them would like to be teachers.'

Qing stayed in the HCR until the Nationalist government announced the transformation of it into a formal school. She returned to Guangzhou to take up a teaching post in another primary school. As she concluded her time in the HCR, 'I had made the best use of my youth to be a teacher and I gained so much there: friendship, opportunity, trust and most important of all valuable experience.'

Fang wanted to continue her teaching work by joining the army. 'I was glad to have a chance to be a teacher although the target students were not the same. At

the outset, I was not confident enough to work in the army for I was still a young girl. My working experience was limited to a few months' teaching in a primary school in Hong Kong. But it was better to do something suitable to me than staying in Guangzhou without anything to do. I thought it was also meaningful to do something for my country especially during the time of difficulty. In fact, I had asked my teacher for advice and he encouraged me to take the opportunity. The one I worried were my mother and brother who might need my care. After asking for approval from my mother, I joined the Nationalist army and went to northern Guangdong.'

In the army, Fang was assigned to be a teacher helping the soldiers to improve language ability and carry out propaganda work among the people. Occasionally, she needed to organize some recreational activities for the soldiers with her colleagues 'I had to design different reading texts and exercises for my students because they had different levels of education. I taught them to write letters to their parents and relatives and sometimes I would write for those who were illiterate. It was so sorry to see that so many young men did not even know how to write a simple letter so I was determined to help them improve their language ability.' Apart from this, it was also Fang's duty to help them understand the instructions from the senior military officers. 'It seemed that I was an indispensable member of the army because their understanding of instructions from above was crucial to an operation.' Fang's another duty was to instill patriotic thought in the soldiers so that they would become more committed and fight with high morale. 'There were times I told them the history of Japanese invasion but I must make it simple. I also taught them to sing patriotic songs which were the best method to keep them in highest morale. What I learned in my school days became useful and practical at that moment.'

Fang also helped with clerical work in the army. 'I had to do paper work for the officers and sometimes draft letters or notices for them. It was not my main duty and I did it only when the secretary was not in the headquarters. I was delighted to see that my superiors trusted in me and act as a bridge between the soldiers and their officers.'

On the other hand, Fang was responsible for propaganda work among the people. 'Besides designing propaganda pamphlets, I participated in the preparation for performance in which anti-Japanese dramas were played. This was one of the most direct and effective ways to educate the peasants and the masses so we kept on creating new dramas for them. Simple anti-Japanese songs and short slogans were designed for the peasants to follow during the intermission and after the performance. In the course of these activities, I realized the meaning and importance of knowledge and education to my people and most of all how lucky I was to have received education.'

Rong did not want to stay in Hong Kong and Macao because she could not find a suitable job. The work in factories and the company was rather monotonous. It required physical energy rather than intellectual ability and that was not her strength. The things Rong learned in the school had little value in that environment and she was treated as an ordinary worker. The work as a clerk in a company was a bit better for Rong needed to handle some cases and prepared documents for her boss. Later Rong was invited by her uncle in Macao to work for him. 'My uncle was a rich merchant in Macao but I did not know what his business was. During the first few months in Macao, my uncle did not give me any work. He just asked me to travel around Macao with my cousins and helped them do their homework. I became the playmate and helper of my cousins. At first, I was happy to live with them but later, being no significant things to do, I missed my family very much.'

Here is a summary of the teaching activities of Ru and Qing: Teaching, character building, vocational training, counseling, organizing extra-curricular activities as well as protecting the children from danger. These activities required them to have different knowledge, skills and talents. Some of the methods they used were created by themselves and some of them were methods used by their teachers in the School. The knowledge they learned helped them deal with different situations and achieved remarkable results. For example, their creative teaching methods in mathematics and language proved that they made lively use of knowledge. In return, they gained respect and recognition.

Fang also needed to apply their knowledge in three aspects: to teach the soldiers read and write; to act as a channel between soldiers and superiors and to publicize patriotic ideas among the villagers and farmers. Besides language proficiency, she needed to know something about communication and organization skills. She played an important role in the army and won the appreciation in a male-dominated world. Without education, she could hardly achieve it.

While Qing, Ru and Fang were serving the children and soldiers, Rong suffered from a lack of opportunity for self-actualization. The problem of Rong was that she did not want to be a 'vase' which implied a deficiency of talent and knowledge. However, it was Rong's search for meaning that made her commit to teaching in the end.

9.2. Teaching Life in the 'New China'

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was born in Mainland China after the Nationalist army had retreated to Taiwan in 1949. In an essay Mao Zedong

wrote in mid-1949, he laid down his goals of governing China. The first was to arouse the nation's masses to build a "domestic united front under the leadership of the working class." This united front included the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie and the working classes, and the last would take the lead in forming a "people's democratic dictatorship" (Spence, 1990: 514).

In the first months of the People's Republic of China, the government had to face the tasks of restraining inflation, building up agricultural production, restoring the dismantled heavy industries, and maintaining law and order. Since there was a lack of trained cadres to take up all the tasks, the government was to persuade the educated technical and managerial elites to serve the new state, regardless of their personal political beliefs or affiliations (Spence, p. 515).

9.2.1. Attitudes Towards the New State

Rong and Ru shared a mixed feeling towards the new government. On one hand, they were glad to see the war was over and a unified government was finally established, on the other, they were not certain about their future. Rong was especially worried for her husband had worked in the Nationalist government. 'I could see the people were very excited in the streets, they welcomed the coming of the Communists but some of my friends showed that they worried about their future because somehow it was a different Party.' Rong said.

'I longed for peace for a long time. I could not forget the 'dark' time during the war in which so many people had died and so many children had lost their parents and families. I was very disappointed with the continued fighting between the two Parties after the surrender of Japan. Now, the war was finally over and, no

matter you liked it or not, there was a new life waiting for you. I told myself that whatever the changes I would go on to be a teacher.' Ru recalled.

Fang and Qing were happy to witness the setting up of a new and unified state in which the people were able to enjoy peace and prosperity. They had different reasons to be so optimistic. 'To me, peace was much better than fighting. We no longer faced the danger of being killed and we had a chance to build a better society or country. I heard so much about the corruption of the Nationalist government and I hoped that the new government was better.' Qing said. Fang raised her point in this way, 'At that time, I believed that both the Three People's Principles and Communism were two methods to improve the country. They shared a common goal and expectation that human being would one day reach the Great Peace (*dadong*) in which everybody was equal and class exploitation was removed. Therefore, I welcomed the establishment of a unified China. At least we had a chance to try a new method.' Fang admitted, 'I was not so mature at the time, I did not see any fundamental difference between the two ideologies.'

The mixed feeling of worry and excitement among the respondents reflected the effect of the depoliticization policy of the Nationalist government. In the First School for girls, Communism was not allowed to propagate. They did not have a real understanding of what it was and any knowledge about it came from brief introduction of certain teachers. However, they did have some sort of contact with it, e.g. Qing's sister had joined the underground party secretly. During the War, they came into more contact with some 'progressive' colleagues. But due to the suppression of the GMD, it was not easy to discover their real identity.

9.2.2. The Reorientation of Values

There was an optimistic and hopeful feeling among the people at large immediately after the new government was formed (Meisner, 1986: p.65). The policies of the government did gain the support of educated elite. Most of them were allowed to work in their positions and appointed important posts in both the government and other enterprises. Rong's husband was invited to work as an accountant in the new state-owned Bank of China while Qing, Ru and Fang were allowed either to teach in their school or transferred to other schools. They did agree that they were respected and recognized at the outset and they were willing to play active parts in the new regime as teachers. In this section, the attitude of the respondents towards the change of regime was presented.

Fang anticipated that there must be changes in every aspect under the new regime especially the Communist Party had severely criticized the policies of the Nationalist government. She believed that the people should try their best to participate in the reconstruction of the country after a long period of foreign war and internal conflicts. In 1949, Fang joined an association of teachers, an affiliated body of the Communist Party. She started learning 'New Democracy' and 'On Federal Government' written by Mao Zedong with a positive attitude. 'I gradually accepted the ideas of communism which hoped to set up an equal society in which everybody had jobs to do, food to eat and house to live. I was so enthusiastic in learning that others thought that I was a Communist. In fact, I had never joined the Party.' It might be due to the enthusiasm and commitment of Fang to the study of communist ideas, she was later appointed the principal of a primary school after teaching for a short time in the same school.

Ru was glad to see the end of internal rivalry and hoped that the new regime could bring about real peace and economic development in China. Although Ru believed that the Three People's Principles by Dr Sun was the best way to save and

strengthen China, she did accept that there might be other alternatives which could achieve the same goals. During the long period of being a teacher, she had never thought of joining the ruling Party although it might mean convenience and special rights. 'I did not want to get involved into the swirls of power and politics. That was not my world. I loved teaching and reading books. I loved literature and writing. Therefore, I would keep myself off from power and politics. Moreover, it was easy for you to look at any matter and raise opinions if you were a outsider.' Ru claimed that she belonged to the democratic groups in China which could look at matters from another angle.

Qing's optimistic character made her adjustment to the new political environment much easier. 'As long as there was no fighting, it did not matter who ruled the country. As a matter of fact, corruption and bribery were serious and the people's livelihood was not improved. When I stayed in northern Guangdong I could see the poverty of peasantry. And I had heard the discipline and order of Communist soldiers from different sources. Why didn't we give them a chance to improve the country?' Therefore, Qing contributed her part by continuing her job of a teacher as assigned by the new government after 1949.

Rong's fear as a result of the change of political environment was removed after her husband was appointed the accountant of the state-controlled Bank of China. But the appointment required them to work in Shantou, a city in eastern Guangdong. Rong spent about six years there and gave birth to three children. She was unable to do full time job as she needed to take care of four children (The first one was born in Guangzhou). During this period, Rong was not so happy because she did not like the environment there. 'I did not want my children to speak the dialect of the place. I wanted them to speak our own dialect (Cantonese). Moreover, I missed my relatives and friends in Guangzhou very much. I had been living in

Shantou there for more than five years and that was enough for me.’ After negotiating with her husband who was reluctant to go back to Guangzhou, Rong went back to Guangzhou with four kids.’

The respondents displayed different attitudes towards the setting up of the People’s Republic in 1949. Fang’s active involvement marked a contrast to Ru’s more rational participation. Fang’s active involvement was a result of her contact with Communist ideas and her belief in education as a means of national reconstruction while Ru’s participation was more rational and aloof. Ru equally believed in the value of education but she chose a more objective attitude towards the new regime. She adopted such a stance because she still believed in the Three People’s Principles. Ru chose to stay outside the ruling party reflected her moral courage to raise different opinions.

Qing employed a reality-oriented approach as she thought it was good to give another party a chance to prove its ability while Rong precipitated some changes in the new regime. She needed to face a change of role as her husband was required to move to Shantou. Rong was forced to give up the job of being a teacher.

The active response of the respondents to serve the new regime not only a consequence of their high expectations towards the CCP but also a result of their belief that they could play a part in the construction of the country. In other words, their perception of being the educated women and elitist intellectual classes had made their participation possible. So no wonder that they were invited to fill in the teaching posts. In the section that follows, their life as teachers is examined.

9.2.3. Life as Teachers

The life of Fang as a teacher was quite dramatic. After Fang was appointed the headmaster of a primary school, she was busy with political study and administrative work. Fang also took up the work of the Union of Primary Teachers in Guangzhou. In order to concentrate on her work, Fang asked her mother to take care of them. Later she sent two of her sons to a boarding school to release the pressure of her mother. 'I committed all the time and energy to my teaching and administrative work to meet the needs of a new era and the requirements of the Party. I did hope that I could serve the country with the knowledge I had acquired so far. I seldom thought of the needs of my family at that time because I felt that the chance to participate in the construction of a new China should not be missed. It was good to see the government so concerned with education and I was glad to play a part in it.'

'In the school, I had to arrange political meetings for the teachers in which we studied the works of chairman Mao and the documents from the Party. Each teacher must give response to the questions I raised and say something to show their understanding and support of the policy. We were serious to discuss the problems related to our school. I admitted that it was a form of re-education to correct some of the old values. I needed to instill the instructions from the Communist Party in my students in the morning assembly. Dr Sun's will was put aside and national flag was replaced. I took all these things for granted.'

'I also organized activities for the Union of Primary Teachers which included publishing articles in support of the government policies and on teaching methods under new environment. I helped organize visits and recreational activities for the teachers. It was another arena for political re-education for every teacher was required to join it.' Because of my work in the Union, I was appointed a

representative in the People Council for the province of Guangdong. I was glad to accept it for it was a honour to me and a chance to work for the people.'

'During the Land Reform Campaign, my husband was sent back to his county to face the criticisms of the peasants because his grandfather was a landlord. But in effect he was as poor as me when we got married. In order to save our children and my career, I proposed to divorce with him. He did not agree but it made no difference because my husband was not permitted to leave his county for nearly thirty years. At that time, I was willing to sacrifice all these for the country. But it was the death of two of her sons in the political movements and the Cultural Revolution which disillusioned my hope.'

Fang regretted to spend so much time on school work later as two of her sons died in the rural areas. In early 1960, the Party stipulated that educated youths must be sent to rural areas to live and learn from the peasants. It was expected that they could live on a self-sufficient basis but in reality many faced great problems in adjusting to the harsh rural life (Bernstein, 1977 and Liu, 1996: p.152). It lasted for more than ten years and during this period, million of urban youths headed for the countryside. It was difficult for the urban youths, most of them were just teenagers, to cope with a hostile environment. Moreover, there was a lack of guidance and leadership and the youths were left to face such problems as food shortage, discrimination, violence and illness. Some of them chose suicide to escape from reality (Bernstein, 1977: Ch.4).

'I had not received any letters and news from my sons for a long time so I paid a visit to their brigades. It was the year before the Cultural Revolution broke out. I was shocked to learn that my dear boys had committed suicide. I could not believe it. How could a government send the teenagers to the countryside without

taking care of them? I kept on asking this question and of course there was no answer. I believed a Chinese saying: 'Everybody for me and I for everybody'. But the fact was that nobody cared for my kids while I was busy teaching children of other parents. From then on, I abstained myself from the school work and tried to have a more balanced life by paying more attention to my another two sons.'

'During the Cultural Revolution, I was criticized for marrying a descendent of landlord. As a teacher, I was criticized by my students too. It was fortunate that I was not the main target of criticism especially I had given up the position as the principal. Moreover, since I had been so kind to my students, most of them criticized me just on the surface. Their performance made me cast doubt on the effect of education. I did not agreed to their actions but I knew that they had saved me. But the Revolution had confirmed my view that individuals were helpless and powerless in the face of a centralized government.'

Rong brought her children back to Guangzhou but was impossible to find any job. She had to take care of four kids, the youngest was only one. Rong wanted to find a teaching post so she went to negotiate with the officer of the police (gong-an) for a job. Rong thought that since job-allocation was controlled by the government, it had the duty to arrange suitable job for her. The officer told her that it was better to stay at home to look after the kids and waited for her husband. Rong refuted that women in New China should be independent of males and whether her husband could come back was decided by the government, not by him. In the end, instead of finding her a teaching post, the officer arranged her to be the headmaster of a nursery.

'At the very beginning, I was not satisfied with this arrangement but on second thought, the job was suitable to me. I was able to fulfill the duty of the headmaster and at the same time take care of my kids in the nursery. What was

more, the nursery was near my home so I had enough time to prepare meals for my eldest daughter and son. Thus, I accepted the offer and started planning for my work in the nursery.'

With the passing of time, Rong fell in love with the work. 'I loved to be with little kids of three to five years old. They were simple and cute with lovely faces. I loved the ways they sang and danced, the ways they played and read out the words together. I liked music and singing so I was responsible for teaching them singing. In my opinion, music was very important to the growth of kids so I demanded a harmonium from the department concerned. What a great job it was to see so many smiling faces everyday. When compared with primary and middle schools, the work was comparatively simple. In the afternoon, there was sleeping time for the kids. Each teacher at the nursery took turn to go to market to purchase food for the kids' meals and some food for me. I enjoyed the convenience and satisfaction the job bestowed upon me.'

To be the headmaster of a nursery had another advantage. During the Cultural Revolution, students at all levels were motivated to criticize their teachers. Some even resorted to violence and cases of murdering and hurting teachers were reported. 'I was lucky because my pupils were too small to participate in the Cultural Revolution. Everything was as usual even during the period of great social chaos. The only thing I worried was the criticism from the Party and the sudden intrusion of the Red Guards.' In those days, the Red Guards would travel from place to place to hold meetings of criticism.

Qing was also assigned to teach mathematics in a primary school and she was happy to accept it. According to Qing, the first few years of the People's Republic was the best time of the regime. The new government emphasized the value of teachers and the importance of education to the development of the

country. The society was full of vitality and energy as the people had confidence in the Party. Qing commented that 'was the golden time as mutual trust existed between the government and the people at large. I enjoyed the freedom to travel to Hong Kong and the prosperous atmosphere in Guangzhou. I expected that I could contribute more in the new regime by being a serious and sincere teacher and hoped that my experience would be some use to the school.

Like Fang, Qing at first concentrated most of her time on teaching. She joined every political meeting and cultivated good relationships with colleagues and seniors and prepared her lessons seriously. Qing said that mathematics was abstract knowledge and she must make it concrete for her students. Qing remembered her success at the Home for the children refugees and improved the methods she had adopted. She was among the most popular teachers in her school and it saved her life during the Cultural Revolution as one of the leaders of the Red Guards was her student. 'I was the only teacher who could teach my students during the chaos of the Cultural Revolution because the student leaders always listened to me. Even the principal sent me as his representative to talk with the students. It was probably due to my optimistic and easy-going character and the relations I built with them.'

The experience and memory of her time in the HCR also made her more determined to be a teacher for the rest of her life. She had witnessed the miserable life of orphans and children of broken families. These children needed education so that they could live happily and independently in the new environment. The mission of educating the youngsters, according to Qing, should not be terminated with the setting up of a new government. On the contrary, it was the time that the country needed them most.

During the first year of the new regime, Ru was still the master of academic affairs of her school. She was responsible for teaching and sharing with students in morning assembly. Shortly afterwards, Ru was not allowed to take up the task because she was not a member of the Communist Party. Ru expressed that it was a proper arrangement as she did not like to be the speaker of the Party. She became an ordinary teacher of Chinese language and communicated with her students through poems and literature. 'I was contented to be a language teacher and hoped that my knowledge would help my students. It was also my wish to teach my students to appreciate the beauty of language and to think independently as my teachers had taught me to do so when I was young. Most important of all, China was a backward country and the future development of China depended upon the men of talents we produced. Therefore, it was my responsibility to teach each lesson well.'

Ru realized the shortage of teachers at the beginning of the People's Republic and the life as a teacher was very hard. 'You had to teach more students in a class and the workload was really heavy. Besides, you had to attend political meetings and study groups organized by individual schools. The Party also put forward the policy of criticism and self-criticism and meetings and paper work were increased. But when I thought of the future generation of youths with knowledge and skills, my job was sacred and meaningful. And as matter of fact, the students in the early 1950s were really hard-working. The students' diligence convinced me that China would have a bright future.' However, the sporadic political campaigns had shaken Ru's confidence in the sincerity of the government to continue educational development. On the other hand, the fact that normal teaching in the classrooms was affected by the disruptive force of the political campaigns further convinced Ru that education was the key to modernization.

During the Cultural Revolution, it was not uncommon that students persecuted their teachers with violence and terrorism (Wang, 1996: p.25). But Ru was so proud of her students' behaviour during the Cultural Revolution that she was hilarious when she mentioned them. Ru believed that her teaching work did have some influence on her students as they refused to despise and ill-treat her when other students had lost their rationality. Once when Ru's students were ordered to criticize her at the campus, they refused to do so and said that they could not find out any mistake about her. Ru turned the crisis into a lesson by pointing out to her students that nobody was free from errors, so they must try to find out Ru's weaknesses or shortcomings and write a report to their superiors. When the students were reluctant to do so, Ru taught them to criticize her hobby of reading poems which could be considered products of feudalism.

The political campaigns and the Cultural Revolution brought about doubts on the part played by teachers. According to the Party, teachers belonged to the categories of intellectuals who were despised as parasites and barriers to the advance of socialism. This had made Ru rather disappointed. 'The development of the country depended on the educational level of the people. But the teachers who had played such an important role in elevating the educational level of the people were persecuted. It was absurd and unbelievable. The policies of the Party in past forty years always changed with political struggles and campaigns. Teachers and intellectuals were regarded as targets of purges, especially during the Cultural Revolution. Normal teaching and school life were severely interfered. I believed that school life should be happy and peaceful like that of my school days. Innocent students should not be mobilized to fight against one another and teachers. On the contrary, they should be well guided and protected when they were immature. In a word, how could our country make progress under such confusion?'

Ru still believed that education was the foundation of progress and modernization. The 'Four Modernizations' could not be achieved without ample supply of men of talents so more resources should be put into education. Our country must respect knowledge more than political consciousness in the process of building up a modernized state. 'I insist on reading books and newspapers everyday and watching international news every night. Thanks for the proximity to Hong Kong, I can watch some good programmes which update my knowledge and widen my horizon.'

The life of the four respondents as teachers reflected both the limitations and possibilities of education under the rule of the CCP. When the new regime was first established, men of talents and intellectuals were recruited to work for the new government. There was a sense of optimism that China had a promising future. But the political campaigns that followed shattered the hope of the people. As teachers, the four respondents could not escape the adverse effects of the campaigns, it was impossible for them to teach normally. However, their endeavour still bore some fruits and displayed the positive effects of education.

Fang's active involvement ended with disappointment towards the government as two of her son died in the political campaign. The fact that she was appointed the headmaster was due to her ability and experiences rather than her political consciousness. During the Cultural Revolution, her students tried to protect her from serious criticism and showed that positive effect of education was not totally disappeared. Similar situations were found in the cases of Ru and Qing since their students also protected them. It presented a contrast to the violence and bloodshed that prevailed at the time. The benefit of education as a means of enlightenment could be seen from these cases. There must be variations in the

teacher-students relationships and students might show resistance in the course of the movement.

It was also the students' diligence that made Ru so optimistic about education and in Ru we see the benefits of education. Ru was a woman with independent thinking, the courage to raise her own opinions and the loyalty to her own ideal and principles. After becoming the headmaster of a nursery, Rong re-discovered the meaning of education. While the other three respondents were facing interference from political campaigns, Rong underwent a process of self-actualization in educating the pupils of the nursery.

All of them criticized the destructive forces of the political campaign, especially the Cultural Revolution. They also disagreed to the ways the Party treated teachers and intellectuals. As teachers, they could not bear to see the waste of time, energy and most important of all men of talents on political movements. Ru pointed out the government should bear the responsibility of using education as a tool of political struggles and ignoring modernization of the country. It should not be surprised that they made such comments as they had benefited from education and derived their self-identity and satisfaction from delivering education to the younger generation.

After examining the ways the four respondents used their knowledge through the participation in their work and families and the benefits they received from schooling, the following section focuses on a generalization of these benefits from their unique experiences. The benefits discerned include the independence of educated women, competence and participation, the impact of knowledge. It also includes the cultivation of critical and rational mind, the impact of patriotism (the

uniqueness of the girls' school, the search for free love and marriage as well as the emergence of a bond of sisterhood (social network).

9.3. Benefits of Schooling

9.3.1. The Elitist Education

Judging from the curriculum provided by the First School for girls, it was not so different from any other public middle schools in China. Comprehensive curriculum was adopted and the design of curriculum was more or less the same except that there were variations in elective subjects. The curriculum aimed at providing elitist education and preparing potential students for the universities. Although subjects in vocational nature were offered, they were not part of the core subjects in middle education.

In fact, since the setting up of the Republican government in 1911, curriculum had become increasingly westernized. Though traditional knowledge in the form of Classics appeared from time to time. As a result of the domination of returned students in the field, there was a large use of foreign materials in the curriculum (Wang, 1966: p.500). Moreover, modern Western-style education was bound to grow in urban centres where contacts with western culture were pronounced. The high concentration of well-off classes in these cities also illustrated the unequal distribution of modern schools. (Huang, 1996: p. 20)

The popularity of the western-style curriculum could be explained with the fact it was the best way to enter the elitist tertiary education. With the limited number of tertiary institutions and the uneven distribution of them in China, an educational degree would mean a promise of better job opportunity and high social

status. Therefore, to be enrolled in a middle school was the necessary step for further study in tertiary level.

The curriculum in the First School for girls bore resemblance with that provided by mission girl schools in terms of subject contents. The main differences laid in the use of language, the inclusion of Religious Knowledge and the emphasis on Music in the mission schools. These differences did nothing to undermine the principle of elitism implied behind the curriculum.

In entering the First School for girls, Ru already had Zhongshan University in her mind. The aspiration was further strengthened during her school days by the first hand experiences of some college students who acted as part-time teachers of physical education. Qing displayed similar aspiration upon joining the school and it was consolidated by the success of her sister. Rong's wish was to be a college student and specialized in certain field. Even Fang expressed disappointment as she learned that she was no longer possible to study in the First School for girls. Therefore, the idea that education as a ladder to success was obvious in their interpretation of schooling benefits.

9.3.2. Independence of the Educated Women

Without education, it was not easy for a woman to find a suitable and respectable job. In the ancient time, women in China suffered from the lack of economic status and had to rely on the male counterparts. This life of dependence not only limited the freedom of women but also placed them in an inferior position. Therefore, the search for economic independence was one of the major concerns of the respondents in this study.

All of them attributed their economic power to the education they received. Qing remembered what her parents said, 'Education is the best thing we can give you because properties will vanish one day but knowledge will always be with you.' Qing had to work and earn a living for herself and her adopted daughter. In fact, one of the criteria of adopting a child was a steady source of income. After the officials learned that she was a teacher, they accepted Qing's application.

Ru's father also said it was important to learn how to read and write. 'I fully understood the meaning of economic independence after I got married. I worked as a teacher and received my salary. I did not need to use any of my husband's money. My father-in-law and mother-in-law respected me in the family for my economic contribution to the family and we maintained harmonious relationship with each other.' The right to inherit properties was denied to women before but now Ru elevated her economic status by making money and keeping her own properties.

Fang had to take care of four children after her husband was sent back to his county to face criticism during the Land Reform. Fang remembered, 'my husband's monthly income was just about one dollar. The expenditure of the family relied on me at that time. I was fortunate to have a job and steady income to keep my family. Life in the village was rather difficult in the post-liberation years so every month I sent some money to my husband to improve his living. Nowadays, the economic position of women has improved a lot and they could enjoy greater freedom than before.'

Rong was also proud of her support of four children with relying on her husband in Shantou. 'My husband did not agree to my decision that I went back to Guangzhou with our kids because it was impossible for him to take care of us. He also worried about the economic condition of the family if he went with us

immediately. However, I convinced him with the reason that I could work and had confidence to find a job in my home city.' Economic independence had placed Rong on equal footing with her husband. In this case, what prompted Rong to make such a decision was her belief that she was well qualified to find a job and earned a living for her family. After returning to Guangzhou, Rong was given the post of headmaster in charge of a nursery. The salary she received was enough for the expenditure of the family. Her husband did not need to leave Shantou for the time being until the government allowed him to come back to Guangzhou. 'We respected each other and we were good partners. My children also respected me because they appreciated my ability.'

9.3.3. Being Competent and Active Participation

In the whole life, the respondents faced problems of great and small. The knowledge they received increased their confidence to act independently and live self-sufficiently. Education also offered them a sound foundation on which they could grow or develop. There were occasions showing their ability to comprehend reality and seek for proper support and arrangements. During the Land Reform Campaign, Fang's husband was forced to go back to his county to face criticism, Fang realized the need to terminate relationship with her husband so as to protect the four kids. 'I asked for a divorce. Of course this was not my real intention. We did this for our children who would face serious attacks from other people because their grandfather and father were great landlords. This was a painful decision but I took it as a temporary means to avoid dangers.'

After Rong returned to Guangzhou with her children, the first thing she did was to find a job. Rong was confident to start working again for two reasons: First, she believed that educated women were still in small number and the education she

received would place her in an advantageous position. Second, jobs were arranged by the government during the post-1949 years, so she went to negotiate with government officials for a suitable job. 'I told them about my need and condition and brought along the certificate (most people burned their certificates during political campaigns so as to avoid persecution) to prove my qualification. People asked me not to show them my certificate because there was a national flag of Republican China on it. But I was not afraid because it had nothing to do with my background. At first, the officials asked me to stay at home and wait for my husband. I did not agree with them and said women should participate in the national construction in new China. In the end, I was given the post to take charge of a nursery school.'

The four respondents displayed competence during the War of Resistance. Ru's performance was appreciated and was appointed the chief teacher in the HCR. Ru was responsible for educating the youth and imbued them with patriotic feeling. 'I was glad to do the job because my ability was recognized. I thought I was chosen for my diligence and seriousness in my work and my ability to give elegant speeches.' Ru described clearly how she prepared for the assembly. 'In order to make my speech attractive and appealing, I had to use similes, examples and real experiences in daily life. I tried to tell them stories about historical figures and outstanding personalities to arouse their patriotic feeling. Every night before I went to bed, I wrote down the ideas in my mind so that I remembered everything I had thought of. The night before I made the speech, I would practice by reading it out to myself. I must thank King Zhu, my Chinese language teacher, who taught me to put my thought on papers and it helped me a lot.'

When Fang recalled her days in the Nationalist army, she also described the nature of her work. 'Although we worked as a team, we also divided the task

among the members and needed to work independently. You did not have much time to think thoroughly what you had to write and say. You must work efficiently and accurately every time to finish your task. I admitted that the pressure was great sometimes because you could not make any mistake. As a member of the propaganda team, I had to deal with different kinds of people, you must use different methods to approach to them and draw their attention. I learned a lot through these activities especially the skills of communication. I was glad that I was able to act as a bridge between people.'

Qing was required to teach mathematics and sometimes other subjects in the HCR and she did not get accustomed to this arrangement at the outset. 'I was strong in teaching mathematics but not language and gardening. At first, I did not know how to help the students so I asked my superiors to buy some relevant books from the city and started the process of self-study. I also discussed with other teachers who taught me first before I taught my students. I became more confident with the passing of time.'

9.3.4. The Impact of Knowledge

Freire points out that schooling should enable students to generate their own meanings and frame of reference and to develop their self-determining powers through their ability to perform a critical reading of reality so that they can act on that reality (Giroux, 1981: p.130). Knowledge is seen as an active force used by the students to make sense of their 'life-worlds' (Giroux, 1981: p.131). The respondents faced drastic changes immediately after graduation and in the post-1949 years. It is interesting to examine how education facilitated their participation in society.

All the respondents shared the view that they mixed feeling towards the great events they had confronted. 'I was unlucky because I was unable to further our education, but now when I look back on those days, I was happy that I had taken part in a meaningful task protecting and educating the young kids and orphans. Now most of them become active members of the society and contribute to the development of the country. I know that it had been impossible for me to play that part if I would not have received education myself. I also understand that I could be a teacher after 1949 was mainly due to the knowledge and experience I had. It was not because of my political attitude.' Ru said.

'To me, reality changes with time, I served in the Nationalist army in the War of Resistance and I worked for the Communist Party after 1949. But my hope to teach the younger generation remained unchanged. I could still find the meaning of my work in two different times. First, they must know how to read and write, then they had a chance to understand the world. I said so because it was real to me when I was a student. Education is the best way to remove illiteracy in China. Once you can know how to read and write, you may absorb all sorts of knowledge and improve yourself.' said Fang.

'For a time, the loss of opportunity to be a college student disappointed me. I did not accept that I was just the headmaster of a nursery in the new China. Later, I began to realize how fortunate I was, especially when I compared myself with my four kids. Except my eldest daughter, they had wasted their youth in restless political campaigns. My elder son spent nearly ten years in the countryside, my younger son was given a modest post in a factory while my youngest daughter was sent to a tea plantation in north Guangdong. It was sad and painful to see that my beloved children wasting their time on meaningless work. It was not good to the whole country too. Now, I am the most literate person in my family so I want to

spend more time on my grandchildren teaching them all the things I know. English, mathematics, science so and so forth.’ Rong finds a new meaning of life in teaching her grandchildren.

9.3.5. Cultivation of Critical and Rational Mind

The act of knowing is a questioning attitude (Giroux, 1981: 133) and literacy is a precondition to understand the dialectical relationships between subjectivity and objective world. (Freire, 1987: p.110) One of the characteristics displayed by the respondents was their power to reason and reflect on what happened to them and the outside world and the ability to criticize what they believe to be problematic.

After 1949, Ru became the academic master of a primary school for a short while. She refused to join the ruling Party but later she became a member of a democratic party under the leadership of the Communist Party. Ru did not agree to the political movements launched by the Party because it was a waste of time and manpower. ‘I deeply appreciated those who raised different opinions within the Communist Party such as Peng Dehuai and Zhou Enlai during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. I also appreciated the authors of the book ‘*Yanshan yehua*’ [1] who were courageous enough to point out the problems of the country. It was a pity that they needed to face inhuman treatment during the Revolution.’

Even today, Ru is fond of reading newspapers and books. She commented the weak diplomatic stand of the Chinese government in the face of Japanese aggressors in the Island of Diaoyutai Incident and worried about the loss of freedom and democracy in Hong Kong after the handover in 1997. ‘My generation had suffered from the Japanese aggression and it is impossible for me to forget

their fault. Now our government appeases the Japanese for the sake of economic benefits. It is absolutely not a wise diplomatic policy.’ Ru pointed out.

Qing also criticized the Cultural Revolution for its irrationality and absurdness. She raised different point of view during a meeting of teachers in the school but was severely criticized by all the colleagues. Qing chose to remain silent in later days. During the Revolution, Qing’s brother was criticized and put in prison. Nobody dared to pay a visit to him. Qing disregarded the advice from her relatives and friends and visited her brother at the prison. ‘I was not afraid because I had not done anything wrong and I knew my brother was also innocent. I went to negotiate with the party cadres at the prison but they warned me not to say anything. They promised to let me visit my brother once a month until he was released. I learned that you must put up for yourself with reasons and gave them pressure, otherwise, no one would care about you.’

Another thing suggested by Qing was that she petitioned the student leaders not to persecute their teachers in the campus. Qing was sent to talk with the student leaders by her colleagues because nobody wanted to risk the danger of being persecuted. Qing successfully persuaded the student leaders not to beat the teachers anymore, instead the teachers needed to listen to orders from them.

Rong had her own story. In order to prevent her youngest daughter from staying in the tea plantation for too long, she wrote a letter to the department concerned with reasons. Rong argued that it was the state policy to allow one of the children to stay at home with parents. The government should not send all her children away. After two months, Rong was notified that her daughter was coming home.

The experience of the respondents explained the fact that even in an era of irrationality and absurdness, the power to reason was still important and critical. Education did furnish them with reasoning power which really worked in their daily life. In a world of sheer power, the only weapon of an individual was reasoning power and this was the subtle strength of being an educated person.

9.3.6. The Search for Freedom of Love and Marriage

When compared with the women in the nineteenth century, the consciousness of women towards love and marriage had been transformed. This transformation was much greater in the urban areas than in the countryside. While tradition still lingered in rural villages in the interior of China, attitude towards free love and marriage started to take root in the younger generation. As a matter of fact, some of the adults had adopted an open mind towards relationship between both sexes. This can be discerned from the attitude of the four respondents towards love and marriage. All of them criticized the traditional marriage in which the spouse was arranged by parents or other people. They adopted an open attitude towards love between two sexes. Moreover, their marriages were more or less affected by the War of Resistance. During the war years, people had to run away from Japanese attack. It was impossible for them to have normal dating like that in time of peace. But it was also due to this unusual situation that freedom of love and marriage expressed in a particular form. The following was the cases told by Qing and Rong.

‘I met a male teacher in the HCR who treated me very well. His name was called Hung who came from a poor family. We worked together. We shared with each other nearly everything. One early spring, I fell serious sick and the colleagues sent me to the hospital in the city for operation. I did not have enough money to pay for the operation and Hung gave doctor all his saving so that the

operation was able to go on. I was deeply touched by his love and generosity and we became lovers after that. One day, Hung told me that his mother was seriously ill and he must return two days later. Hung wanted me to marry him and return home with him. Hung had arranged a simple ceremony with our superiors as witnesses. I was at a loss of what to do that night. The next day I turned him down because I did not accept the simple wedding. I was affected by the grand weddings of my elder sisters. Maybe it was too fast for me to think of marriage, anyway I turned him down. But I made a decision which I regretted for the rest of my life. Hung left two days later and never returned to HCR again.’ From then on, Qing did not want to think of love and marriage again and adopted a daughter after 1949. ‘

‘It was not a common practice to adopt a child in those days and I heard a lot of gossips and comments from my neighbours and colleagues. Some really cared about my marriage but others learned it just to satisfy their curiosity. I did not bother to explain to them one by one because good behaviour was the best orator. Moreover, It was more important to lead a happy and meaningful life. I adopted my daughter not just because I needed company but also mainly because I like children. I always remembered the days I spent with my students in the HCR. Besides, it was a good thing to help those in need. I want to live a meaningful life.’ Qing points out.

Rong fell in love with the son of her neighbour. They kept it in secret for Rong’s mother was more conservative towards love and marriage. During the last year of middle education, Rong had seen some matchmakers coming to visit her mother. Rong frankly expressed that she would make decision herself. Rong disclosed the love affair to one of her teachers. ‘She was my music teacher and I liked to talk to her after school. She was a young lady who came back from the USA. My teacher asked me not to talk about marriage so early and encourage me to further my study in the college. She told me that true love must and could stand the

test of time so I should wait until the most appropriate time to come. I treasured the advice she gave me and told my boy friend to concentrate on study too. He respected my opinion’

After Guangzhou fell in the hands of the Japanese, Rong went to work in Hong Kong and Macao. She exchanged letters with her boyfriend for about two years and found that she really missed him. Rong’s mother also sent letters urging her to return home and in the letter her mother expressed her worry about Rong’s marriage and future. In the end, Rong decided to go home and told her mother the truth. Rong married her boyfriend after Japanese had withdrawn from the city.

Fang’s husband was her colleague in the army. He was a university graduate and came from a declining landlord family. They worked with each other in helping the illiterate soldiers and he was a secretary to the military commander. ‘We understood each other well as we worked in the same division. I like his frank character and his talent of writing good essays. After I left the army, we always exchanged letters to keep close contact. We got married after the War of resistance but unfortunately he had to go back to his county to face purge. For the sake of protecting my children during the Land Reform, I suggested to divorce from him but he refused to sign the paper. He asked me to wait for his coming back because in those days separation of spouses was very common. However, I had to wait for nearly 30 years. He came back in 1979 after the government adopted the reform movement. He always jokes that he treasures the time with me and says that now is our golden days.’

It is not easy to see the effect of schooling on their perception of love and marriage because no formal discussion was provided in the Girls’ School. The development of attitude might be due to various factors. Personal talks with

teachers, learning from movies and books, sharing among intimate friends and even teachings from parents. It is not easy to understand why Qing refused to marry the man she loved just because of the wedding was not grand enough. Maybe Qing thought that it was not serious enough in front of so many colleagues. Traditional customs and rituals still had the function to legitimize important events like marriage in one's life. Traditional values were so deep-rooted in people's mind that it would take a long time to change them. However, it was certain that free love and marriage had started to prevail in the urban centres like Guangzhou especially after the May Fourth era during which free love and marriage were seen as the emancipation of Chinese women (Witke, 1971: ch.5).

9.3.7. "We are Graduates of 1937"

The four respondents graduated in 1937, a year always remembered by the contemporary Chinese for starting to fight against the Japanese aggressors. When mentioned their school days, they would start with their participation in anti-Japanese campaign in 1931, the year they joined the First School for girls and the year Japan annexed Manchuria. Patriotism and nationalism in the sense of fighting against the Japanese were taken for granted. 'We grew up with the sufferings of the people and the increasing encroachment of Japan. Within our middle school life, nearly all the major news was about Japanese invasion. We lived with all the major events such as Manchurian Crisis, Xian Incident, Second United Front and Marco Polo Bridge Incident. Everybody was talking about these events. In the school, principals talked about them in the assembly and teachers shared with us in the classroom. It was the title of composition and speech-making. It was also the main talking point in our conversation. We could never forget all these events because they had affected our country and had changed our fate. They also made us tread on a path which was unique and particular.

'It was the worst time for us because the War in 1937 shattered many of our dreams. For me, I could no longer a college student because I had to escape for freedom and safety. For other classmates, they were unable to achieve their goals. However, It was also the best of the time because I could actualize myself through the participation in salvation movement for my motherland. I could save so many lives and educate so many youths who represented the future of my country. We had done a great job for our country and our fellow countrymen. Today, I still hope that my country will become strong and modernized so that the dreams of the younger generation can come true. We must be more alert because some people in Japan still refuse to apologize and distort the history of Nanjing Massacre. I am angry with the Japanese government and hope that our government will not lose the face of Chinese people.' Ru expressed with discontent.

'It was impossible to record all the brutal acts of the Japanese soldiers. The soldiers told me what they had seen in the battlefields and in some villages. The Japanese killed women and children who were innocent. They burned and destroyed their houses and everything in the villages. I also learned what they had done in Guangzhou from the letters by my relatives and friends. They ill-treated the citizens with torture. All these were matters of fact. I admitted that I did not have any good impression on Japanese.' Fang said.

Qing wished that there would not be any war in China though she strongly criticized the ambition and brutal behaviour of the Japanese. 'We lived in nightmare when we were young so we longed for peace in our heart. We may forgive the fault of Japan but their leader should send sincere apology to our people and settle the remaining problems, or example, the problem of compensation. On the other hand, we should not forget history so that future generation will understand the truth.'

Rong lived under the Japanese rule a few years and raised her own point. 'We must not forget the wrongdoing of the Japanese militarists for they had brought insult and suffering to our people. But we must learn from the wisdom of a Chinese saying "know yourself and your enemy better, you will never fail". Therefore, we should strengthen and modernize our country, not only economically but morally, so as to remain invincible.'

The encroachment of Japan on China did teach every thinking person a lesson. The points raised by the respondents not just reflected the insights of these experienced educated women, it showed how significant the year 1937 was to each of them. It is similar to the Woods' definition of critical incidents: 'These are highly charged moments and episodes that have enormous consequences for personal change and development', although the coming of the War did more to twist the fate of the respondents. The graduates of the year 1937 belonged to two houses: the Tie House and the Ke House. The former means iron which symbolizes firmness. The latter refers to the action of attack, meaning that we were not afraid of the invasion of enemies, we would fight back with firmness. The names were given by Mr Zhu, the most popular and respectable teacher in the school. Ru pointed out that the house names always reminded our responsibility to the nation and society and our sacrifice for the country. Qing said that the year '1937' had special meaning to them reminding them not to forget the pains of the people. The year 1937 has carried with it patriotism and nationalism.

9.3.8. The Bond of Sisterhood

One of the most prominent features of the respondents was the intimate relation among the graduates of the same year (1937). The School divided two

classes of girls into two houses, each had its own committee members. There were recreational activities and competitions between two houses. But they would like to regard all the classmates as sisters. The School deliberately put them together to learn mutual respect and support. They had developed close relationship during their school days and this spirit of mutual support became strong bond among them. During the Cultural Revolution, some of the students were criticized and persecuted. Some were sent to remote places and were impossible to take good care of their children and families. The students would organize volunteers to extend support and comfort to family members of unfortunate classmates. Material support was also given to meet immediate needs. Some also raised the children of classmates for the time being until the 'storm' passed away. With the passage of time, a strong bond was developed and consolidated. Even now, they would like to treat one another as sisters.

Rong is now the organizer of activities because she enjoys good health. She gave a vivid description of this relationship. 'The mutual trust and support were developed through the difficult days of Japanese invasion and the various political campaigns. We share an experience which is not limited to our school days. We have faced and undergone the ordeal of social and political upheavals. We all belong to this big family. The healthy ones will help the sick classmates and take care of our teachers. For example, we help to buy medicine for them and accompany them to consult doctors. We treasure our days together because we know that it will not be too long. We are glad to see one another at the meeting and we long for another one to come after saying goodbye. In short, we treasure a lifelong friendship which has lasted for half a century.

Qing pointed out that every time they met, they seldom talked about trivial things. They would talk about current affairs and state affairs. They would discuss

the policies of the government. 'We are happy that we can read newspapers and understand what is going on around us. We are serious when we discuss. There was one thing we cannot get a consensus. That is the merits and demerits of the Communist Party because nearly half of us are members of the ruling party.'

'We would like to perpetuate the spirit of our mother School so we plan to establish a primary in remote province where education is still not available to the children. We have been planning for several years and now we enter the stage of negotiating with the government. Later we are going to have fund-raising programmes not only in Guangzhou, but also in Hong Kong, Macao and overseas. Maybe, the name of our mother School will once again come alive.'

'We have asked the permission to establish a scholarship for the students in Guangya Middle School. We chose Guangya because most of the former teachers of the First School went on teaching in that school and Lin Baoquan, one of our principals, became its principal after the War in 1946. We feel that there is a strong tie between Guangya and our mother school and this is another way to perpetuate the name of the First School for Girls. (The scholarship was named after the title of the First School).

According to the respondents, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was an era of absurdity and irrationality. The Chairman of the country was persecuted and tortured. Authority was the target of attack. Bureaucracy was totally de-bureaucratized. Children and students were mobilized against parents and teachers. Class enemies were labeled and persecuted. Purges were frequent within the ruling party. It was impossible to live in peace and harmony. Daily life was in great flux without protection from the state. Under such circumstances, a bond of sisterhood was developed out of a shared history and common experience to meet the

challenges of the most difficult times in the history of New China. Mutual trust and faithfulness, which was rare in the 1960s, had helped them face the political storms while a lot of people chose to end their lives. This may be the greatest unintended benefit of schooling that they had never thought of.

The strong bond among these educated women helped them face the challenges of social and political upheavals and go through ups and downs in their lives. It also helped them internalize the essence and value of faithful sisterhood which in the end brings them a fruitful life.

9.4. CONCLUSION

The education provided by the First school for Girls was elitist in nature. The comprehensive curriculum had paved the way for the girl to further their education in the college. The principals and the teaching staff had a high expectation for the students. Most of the students had their ideals. For instance, Rong intended to enter the university and specialized in a field while Ru originally wanted to be a scientist. The four respondents were proud of having studied in the school not only because there were high quality teachers but also because it was the first public school for girls in Guangdong. Once they joined the school, they were socialized to accept a superior role and they must aim high to contribute to the society and the country. This sense of superiority was pervasive in their daily life. The suspension of the school after the War disappointed many of its graduates including the respondents on the one hand, but it also strengthened and consolidated this superior identity on the other hand.

This sense of pride has another source. The students realized that they were the privileged minority of girls who were able to receive higher education.

However, this group of students, with the demand of the society, was willing to serve others. This sense of superiority did not limit their participation in the society. On the contrary, it turned into an impetus to involve themselves into meaning activities like the respondents in this study.

What made them so special was the strong patriotism within them. They always mentioned that they belonged to the graduates of 1937, the year China was invaded by the Japanese. They felt that there was an indisputable duty to work for their country, in the case of the respondents, through education. To them, it was not a burden, rather it was an honour to be graduated when the country needed them most. Ru and Rong might be disappointed with the loss of a chance to study in the college. But the work they carried out during the War brought great satisfaction to them as they did contribute to the country through teaching the younger generation. Education enabled them to actualize themselves and awarded them with self-worth.

During the political campaigns, especially the Cultural Revolution, they were forced to redefine the benefits of education. Teachers were not respected by students, classes were suspended by the Red Guards. But these did not shake the belief of them. Ru still thought that education was the most important factor in modernizing the country. Qing still believed that students were who were pawns of the leaders were innocent. During the period of social confusion, they still kept the rational and sober mind and in a world of irrationality and absurdity. This was what education bestowed on them.

Education also gave them economic independence which could not be enjoyed by the women before. Economic power brought about freedom and independence and thus changed the relationship between them and their husbands. They were equal partners of their spouses rather than wives playing an inferior role.

The four respondents placed high expectation on the education of their children, because they had tasted the benefits of education. But unfortunately, some of their children had to face the adverse effects of political campaigns and could not achieve higher level of education. This was why they criticized the Cultural Revolution.

The bond of sisterhood developed through many years of trust and support was a kind of supportive system. This system had helped them undergo the most difficult time in life and gave them courage to live on during the Cultural Revolution. And now, it became stronger as their social and familial duties were no longer heavy, and as they remembered their days together.

Note:

[1] Women in the Republican era used the word 'vase' to represent a group of women working in state bureaucracy and private firms. It denoted that their work was of minor importance. Usually, women were required to be dressed up during working hours and therefore they were seen as people for decoration only not for their genuine contribution. In the view of the respondents in this study, it also represented a life-style emphasizing extravagance and westernization in outlook.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

A. Personal information

1. Could you describe something about your family?
2. Could you describe something about your family members?

B. The ways to start schooling?

1. When and how did you start your education?
2. What kind of school did you attend?
3. Do you like to go to school? Why?
4. What did you learn ?
5. Did your parents support you to go to school? Why or Why not?
6. Did you face any barrier in attending school?
7. Did your parents have any expectation on you?

C. The Schooling Process

1. Why did you choose this school?
2. Could you describe the physical environment and facilities of the school?
3. What did you learn in the school?
4. What did you do after school?
5. Could you describe the extra-curricular activities in your school?
6. How did the teachers teach in the classrooms?
7. Which teacher did you like most? Why?
8. How many subjects were there? Which one(s) did you like?
9. Could you describe the relationships between teachers and students?
10. Could you describe the relationships among students and teachers?
11. What was the significance of schooling to you?

D. Benefits of Schooling

1. What did you want to do after graduation?
2. Why did you choose to do it?
3. Did you find your job meaningful?
4. Did the schooling you received help in doing your job? In what ways?
5. In your opinion, What were the benefits of schooling?
6. Did schooling bring changes to your life? Please describe it.
7. Did schooling bring changes to others? (family members, friends, other people)
8. Could you describe your relationships with your family members?
(e.g. husband, children, seniors and grandchildren)
9. How did you see marriage?

Glossary

Anhui	安徽	Jinan daxue	暨南大學
Bai Chongxi	白崇禧	Kaifeng	開封
Beijing Wanbao	北京晚報	Kang Youwei	康有為
Cai Yuanpei	蔡元培	Ke She	克社
Chen Mingshu	陳銘樞	Kunming	昆明
Chen Qiongmíng	陳炯明	Li Zongren	李宗仁
Chao Zhou	潮洲	Li Cuifang	李粹芳
Chen Jitang	陳濟棠	Li Hanyun	李漢雲
Chentong	陳塘	Li Jishen	李濟深
Chiang Kaishek	蔣介石	Liang Oichao	梁啟超
Chihli	直隸	Liangjiao	良渚
Chongqing	重慶	Liang Shuming	梁漱溟
Cixi	慈禧	Lianxian	連縣
Dadong	大同	Liaodong	遼東
Dagang	大綱	Liao Mosha	廖沫沙
Dangyi	黨義	Lin Baoquan	林寶權
Diaoyutai	釣魚台	Lin Biao	林彪
Dongguan	東莞	Liu Shaoqi	劉少奇
Dufu	杜甫	Lu Lanfang	呂蘭芳
Fandang Jituan	反黨集團	Lu Xun	魯迅
Fanglue	方略	Ma Nancun	馬南邨(鄧拓)
Feng Yuxiang	馮玉祥	Manzhu	滿州
Gansu	甘肅	Mao Dun	茅盾
Gu Yingfen	古應芬	Mao Zedong	毛澤東
Guandong Army	關東軍	Mui Tsai	妹仔
Guangdong	廣東	Nanjing	南京
Guangya	廣雅	Nanning	南寧
Guangzhou	廣州	Nanyang gongxue	南洋公學
Guilin	桂林	Ningbo	寧波
Guishou	貴州	Pang Dehuai	彭德懷
Guo Moruo	郭沫若	Panyu	番禺
Guomindang	國民黨	Pooi To	培道
Hu Hanmin	胡漢民	Qianxian Magazine	前綫雜誌

Hua Mulan	花木蘭	Sham Shui Po	深水埗
Huizhou	惠州	Sanjiacun Zhaji	三家村札記
Jiangman	江門	Shaanxi	陝西
Jiangxi	江西	Shanghai	上海
Jinan	濟南	Shantou	汕頭
Shaoquan	韶關	Zhou Enlai	周恩來
Sheng Hsuanhuai	盛宣懷	Zhu Xiuren	朱岫仁
Shunde	順德	Zhujiang Bridge	珠江橋
Sichuan	四川		
Sishu	私塾		
Song Qingling	宋慶玲		
Sun Yatsen	孫逸仙(孫中山)		
Taishan	台山		
Tao Xingzhi	陶行知		
Tie She	鐵社		
Teng bunu	鄧不奴		
Tengfeng Road	登峯路		
Tianjin	天津		
Tainma Lane	天馬巷		
Tongwenguan	同文館		
Tuen Mun	屯門		
Wang Zai	黃節		
Whampao Military Academy	黃埔軍校		
Wu Han	吳晗		
Wu Jufang	吳菊芳		
Wu Zetian	武則天		
Xian	西安		
Xiangjiang	香江		
Xinxing	新興		
Xiucan	秀才		
Yanshan Yehua	燕山夜話		
Yan Xishan	閻錫山		
Ye Suzhi	葉素志		
Yenan	延安		
Yuan	院		

Yuan Shihkai
Yunnan
Zhanjiang
Zhang Zhidong
Zhang Xueliang
Zhao Shaoang
Zhixin
Zhongxi Xuetaang
Zhongzhan

袁世凱
雲南
湛江
張之洞
張學良
趙少昂
執信
中西學堂
中山

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